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### Framework: Ethics

#### Capitalism destroys the meaning of ethics—uses ethical prescriptions as a means to a financial end. Morgareidge 98,

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(Clayton, “Why Capitalism is Evil”, Radio Active Philosophy, Lewis and Clark Educational Papers, [http://legacy.lclark.edu/~clayton/commentaries/evil.html](http://legacy.lclark.edu/%7Eclayton/commentaries/evil.html) )

Well, what is the foundation of moral life? What makes it possible for human beings to recognize that they have responsibilities to each other and to their communities? For example: What could possibly make anyone willing to pay living wages to workers in Indonesia or Haiti if you can get them to work for less? The 18th Century philosopher David Hume asks, What reason can anyone give me to not to prefer the annihilation of all mankind to a scratch on my finger? Hume is one of many philosophers who argue that no such reason can be given. This means that the foundation of ethics lies not in reason, but rather in our passions or our hearts. For Hume it is part of our nature that we feel sympathy for each other, and this sympathy counters our narrow self-interest. Other philosophers have taken similar positions. Josiah Royce an American philosopher of the last century argued that you do not really understand another person if you do not understand her aspirations, fears, and needs. But to understand someone's feelings is, in part, to share them. And you cannot share an aspiration or a need without wanting to see it fulfilled, nor can you share a fear without hoping that it will not come to pass. So the mere recognition of what other human beings are involves us in wanting to see them live and prosper. The French-Jewish philosopher EmmanualLevinás whose major work appeared in 1961 claims that ethics arises in the experience of the face of the other . The human face reveals its capacity for suffering, a suffering we are capable of either inflicting or opposing. So to look into the face of another human being is to see the commandment, Thou shalt not kill. Another American philosopher, NelNoddings, in her 1984 book Caring , argues that the ethical commitment arises out of the caring response that most of us feel towards those who, like children, are in need. Most parents encourage this caring response in their children, with the result that we grow up with an interest in cultivating our own capacity to care for others. Now none of these philosophers are naive: none of them thinks that sympathy, love, or caring determines all, or even most, human behavior. The 20th century proves otherwise . What they do offer, though, is the hope that human beings have the capacity to want the best for each other . So now we must ask, What forces are at work in our world to block or cripple the ethical response? This question, of course, brings me back to capitalism. But before I go there, I want to acknowledge that capitalism is not the only thing that blocks our ability to care. Exploitation and cruelty were around long before the economic system of capitalism came to be, and the temptation to use and abuse others will probably survive in any future society that might supersede capitalism. Nevertheless, I want to claim, the putting the world at the disposal of those with capital has done more damage to the ethical life than anything else. To put it in religious terms, capital is the devil. To show why this is the case, let me turn to capital's greatest critic, Karl Marx. Under capitalism , Marx writes, everything in nature and everything that human beings are and can do becomes an object: a resource for, or an obstacle, to the expansion of production, the development of technology, the growth of markets, and the circulation of money. For those who manage and live from capital, nothing has value of its own. Mountain streams, clean air, human lives -- all mean nothing in themselves, but are valuable only if they can be used to turn a profit. [[1](http://legacy.lclark.edu/%7Eclayton/commentaries/evil.html#_ftn1) ] If capital looks at (not into) the human face, it sees there only eyes through which brand names and advertising can enter and mouths that can demand and consume food, drink, and tobacco products. If human faces express needs, then either products can be manufactured to meet, or seem to meet, those needs, or else, if the needs are incompatible with the growth of capital, then the faces expressing them must be unrepresented or silenced. Obviously what capitalist enterprises do have consequences for the well being of human beings and the planet we live on. Capital profits from the production of food, shelter, and all the necessities of life . The production of all these things uses human lives in the shape of labor, as well as the resources of the earth. If we care about life, if we see our obligations in each others faces, then we have to want all the things capital does to be governed by that care,to be directed by the ethical concern for life. But feeding people is not the aim of the food industry, or shelter the purpose of the housing industry. In medicine, making profits is becoming a more important goal than caring for sick people. As capitalist enterprises these activities aim single-mindedly at the accumulation of capital, and such purposes as caring for the sick or feeding the hungry becomes a mere means to an end, an instrument of corporate growth. Therefore ethics, the overriding commitment to meeting human need, is left out of deliberations about what the heavyweight institutions of our society are going to do. Moral convictions are expressed in churches, in living rooms, in letters to the editor, sometimes even by politicians and widely read commentators, but almost always with an attitude of resignation to the inevitable. People no longer say, "You can't stop progress," but only because they have learned not to call economic growth progress. They still think they can't stop it. And they are right -- as long as the production of all our needs and the organization of our labor is carried out under private ownership. Only a minority ("idealists") can take seriously a way of thinking that counts for nothing in real world decision making. Only when the end of capitalism is on the table will ethics have a seat at the table.

#### Moral questions will inevitably be subordinated to capitalism. Trainer 96,

Trainer, 96 (Ted, University of New South Wales, “Towards a Sustainable Economy”, Jon Carpenter Oxford Publishing, pages 79-80)

The need for a moral economy Clearly, a major problem with our economic theory and practice is that they leave little place for morality. Many extremely important decisions affecting people's welfare are made without reference to what would be morally acceptable. They are made solely on the basis of what will make most money. It has been argued above that there are many other, usually much more important factors, such as what things humans need, what developments would build better cornrnunities and political systems, what would preserve cultural uniqueness, and especially what would maximise ecological sustainability. Decisions which maximise returns to owners of capital often have adverse effects in several or all of these areas, yet in our economy this factor is allowed to determine what is done. No other economic system humans have ever developed has functioned in this way. All previous economies ensured that 'moral' factors, such as social customs setting a 'just price', were the main determinants of economic activity. Market forces and the profit motive were typically given little or no role. Our present economic system and the theory which underlies it obscure the great misery they cause. They deceive us into accepting grossly inhuman consequences. Several sections of this book explain how our economic system is the main factor producing the hunger and deprivation suffered by hundreds of millions of people. Yet this causal connection is not well understood, because we have been led to believe that the market system is natural, efficient and desirable, and that it 'rewards factors of production in proportion to their contributions'. This prevailing ideology leads most people to believe that we are not exploiting the Third World and we are not causing hunger; we are only trading with them, investing and doing normal business. As Bookchin says, ' ... our present economy is grossly immoral... The economists have literally "demoralised" us and turned us into moral cretins'. I Similarly, economic theory claims that when an item becomes scarce its price rises automatically, as if this is a law of nature independent of human will. In fact, the price rises only because individual sellers eager to maximise their income put it up as quickly as they can. Our economic theory obscures the fact that it is not scarcity but human greed which makes prices rise. Above all, economic theory leads us to think that the supremely important goal is to 'get the economy going', to stimulate growth. The fact that this siphons wealth to the rich, deprives the poor, develops the wrong industries and in the Third World starve millions is obscured.

### Framework: Epistemology

#### Recognizing that the epistemology of capitalism manipulates our understanding of policy is a pre-condition to evaluating the resolution. Marsh 95,

Marsh 95- Professor of Philosophy at Fordham University, PhD from Northwestern University (James, Critique Action and Liberation, p 331-2)

Is it reasonable, therefore, even to talk about the possibility of a socialism that transcends this capitalistic system? Here at the very beginning of our discussion it is crucial to be clear about what "reason" is. If being reasonable means operating according to a scientistic, positivistic idea of reason such that any talk of transcending the current situation is irrational, then, of course, democratic socialism is not a rational possibility. However, such a conception of reason is highly questionable. Reason, as I have argued elsewhere and in this book, is dialectical and phenomenological, uniting within itself fact and possibility, "is" and "ought," subject and object. Reason is constitutive, not simply acquisitive or instrumental, and as such constitutes goals and values and reflectively chooses itself as an end in itself in a community of ends. Reason is relational, communal, processive, on the move from lower viewpoints to higher viewpoints and in this sense related creatively to a world developing through a process of emergent probability. According to the conception of reason, one attempting to fix human possibility by saying "this far and no further" is inhibiting human development and is profoundly irrational. Moreover, through a dialectical phenomenological critique made earlier in this book we have discovered late capitalism and state socialism to be profoundly irrational systemically and morally. They are irrational systemically insofar as both systems are susceptible to various kinds of crises, economic, rational, legitimating, or motivational, and both systems systematically repress democratic participation. Both systems exercise a domination, economic or political, that inhibits the free, rational unfolding of human potentiality in all of its fullness. In both systems is a tendency to ignore or repress the subjectivity of human beings and turn them into objects; in both systems is domination of nature and a resulting ecology problem. In such a context, it would be profoundly irrational not to try to think of alternatives to the status quo. In the face of systemic domination, fidelity to the life of reason calls on reason to become revolutionary in its approach to the world. A merely bourgeois or Stalinist rationality is an incomplete, truncated rationality. Moreover, if our model of a dynamic, progressive, developing world system on the move is correct, then such qualitative shifts from one epoch to another should have occurred in the past. One can imagine the Novaks or Kissingers or Friedmans of this world arguing in past centuries that political monarchy is the best human beings can do or that racism is inevitable or that a feudal relationship of lord to serf is the ultimate and best fate of human beings. Yet history has moved on, and there is no reason to think that such movement has stopped with capitalism or state socialism. The irrational, oppressive character of these structures indicates that we should move on; the progressive character of human beings in the world indicates that we can move on. Recent events in eastern Europe only confirm such a judgment.

#### Academic structures have been vertically integrated into the machine of capital. Abstract theorizing directly fuels capitalist accumulation by attempting to explain away the clear and present nature of exploitation. Lander 02,

(Edgardo, Prof. of Sociology and Latin American studies at the Venezuelan Central University in Caracas, “Eurocentrism, Modern Knowledges, and the “Natural” Order of Global Capital, Nepantla: Views from South”, 3.2, muse) BSH

The naturalization of these processes of free circulation of investment and trade, as criteria that dictate the terms under which all societies on the planet necessarily must be organized, is explicitly supported by the expertise of those who speak in the name of specialized knowledges, in this case of economic science (a knowledge in the singular): It is widely recognized by economists and trade experts that the WTO system contributes to development. (WTO 1999b, 7) The economic case for an open trading system based upon multilaterally agreed rules is simple enough and rests largely on commercial common sense. But it is also supported by evidence: the experience of world trade and economic growth since the Second World War. (8) Economists agree that the greatest gains go to the country that slashes its own trade barriers. Readiness to open up to foreign suppliers of consumer goods and of inputs to production improves choices as well as competition in price and services offered. Protection that gives special favours to one sector or another of the economy distorts the way a country uses its productive resources. Removal or reduction of distortions allows resources to be used more efficiently. (WTO 1999a, 5) Another manifestation of the “naturalization”/depoliticization of the issues at stake in international economic relations is the tendency to turn disagreements into technical issues that can be resolved in an “objective” and “impartial” manner by the relevant specialists. The Multilateral Agreement on Investment establishes that regulations (including environmental or health-related regulations) that can be considered polemical from the point of view of their scientific justification may be submitted to a body of scientific experts for consideration (OECD 1998, 66). Similar practices are established in WTO agreements. A separate agreement on food safety and animal and plant health standards (sanitary and phytosanitary measures) sets out the basic rules. It allows countries to set their own standards. (WTO 1999b, 19) Member countries are encouraged to use international standards, guidelines and recommendations where they exist. However, members may use measures which result in higher standards if there is scientific justification. (ibid.) What in these texts appears to be the simple application of objective scientific criteria in reality relates to extremely complex and controversial matters. This is the type of situation that arises when, whether on the basis of scientific evidence (on which consensus may or may not exist) or based on specific preferences on the part of the population, standards are established that regulate, limit, or block the use of a certain product or technological process. This can be seen in the heated debate surrounding foods derived from genetically modified plants and animals. One well-known case illustrating the application of WTO standards is the U.S. lawsuit involving the European Union’s ban on the sale—in E.U. territory—of beef treated with growth hormones. The WTO ruled in favor of the United States, categorizing this ban as an unfair, protectionist practice that went against free trade, forcing the European Union to either allow the importation of these products or face severe sanctions, in spite of the opposition of a great majority of the continent’s population. The opinion of a few experts, chosen by the WTO authorities dealing with conflict resolution, thus overruled the democratically expressed wishes of the people of the European Union. In this case it was determined that the fear of consuming beef treated with growth hormones lacked scientific basis; inside the new world order defined by the WTO, this preference was not one for which people could legitimately opt. The majority of the ethical and political confrontations having to do with techno-scientific matters do not have a univocal scientific solution, and differences of opinion and interpretation can continue indefinitely (Nelkin 1977, 1984). Generally, the issues at stake cannot be resolved solely on the basis of experts’ opinions. People are being denied the sovereign right to found their decisions on ethical choices or on particular cultural contexts. This is an example of the growing authoritarianism of the global capitalist order, exposing the population to the potentially harmful effects of certain techno-scientific processes against its expressed will, merely because “specialists” consider that their opposition is based on nothing more than prejudice. These are not issues that depend on the existence or absence of consensus in the scientific community. In any case, as Hans Jonas (1984, 118) argues, human capacity to wield power over nature is always greater than the predictability of this power’s long-range effects, which, in case of doubt, calls for an ethics of responsibility.7 This ethical choice is denied when it is assumed that, to make this type of decision it suffices to take into account the opinions of experts and the rights of investors (Lander 1994). Beyond the internal controversies within Western, techno-scientific communities lies the fact that in the thousands of conflicts occurring in the world today between the interests of transnational capital and those of rural or indigenous people concerning the use of the environment, there is generally also a conflict in the parties’ views of the cosmos, an antagonism between different knowledge systems and different ways of conceiving the relationships between culture and nature. Nevertheless—and this is a perfect expression of the continual functioning of colonial mechanisms—in the new global capital order only one form of knowledge is recognized: Western scientific knowledge. From this discourse of knowledge the criteria and procedures are established by which all controversies are decided.

### Framework: Value to Life

#### Capitalism turns people into profits, they become nothing more than commodities to be bought, sold, and destroyed— value to life disappears. International Perspective 2000,

Internationalist Persepective, 2000 – staff writer [Issue 36, “Capitalism and Genocide,” Spring – 2000, <http://www.geocities.com/wageslavex/capandgen.html>]

The phenomenon of reification, inherent in the commodity-form, and its tendential penetration into the whole of social existence, which Lukács was one of the first to analyze, is a hallmark of the real domination of capital: "Its basis is that a relation between people takes on the character of a thing and thus acquires a `phantom objectivity', an autonomy that seems so strictly rational and all-embracing as to conceal every trace of its fundamental nature: the relation between people." Reification, the seeming transformation of social relations into relations between things, has as one of its outcomes what the German-Jewish thinker H.G.Adler designated as "the administered man" [Der verwaltete Mensch]. For Adler, when human beings are administered, they are treated as *things,*thereby clearing the way for their removal or elimination by genocide. The outcome of  such a process can be seen in the bureaucractic administration of the Final Solution, in which the organization of genocide was the responsibility of desk killers like Adolf Eichmann who could zealously administer a system of mass murder while displaying no particular hatred for his victims, no great ideological passion for his project, and no sense that those who went to the gas chambers were human beings and not things. The features of the desk killer, in the person of Eichmann, have been clearly delineated by Hannah Arendt.  He is the high-level functionary in a vast bureaucratic organization who does his killing from behind a desk, from which he rationally plans and organizes mass murder; treating it as simply a technical task, no different than the problem of transporting scrap metal. The desk killer is the quintessential bureaucrat functioning according to the imperatives of the death-world. As a human type, the desk killer, that embodiment of the triumph of instrumental reason, has become a vital part of the state apparatus of late capitalism. Here, the Lukácsian concept of reification, the Adlerian concept of the administered man, and the Arendtian portrait of the desk killer, can be joined to Martin Heidegger's concept of das Gestell, enframing, in which everything real, all beings, including humans, are treated as so much Bestand, standing-reserve or raw material, to be manipulated at will. This reduction of humans to a raw material is the antechamber to a world in which they can become so many waste products to be discarded or turned into ashes in the gas chambers of Auschwitz or at ground zero at Hiroshima.

### Framework: Role of the Ballot

#### The role of the ballot and judge as an educator is to reject arguments based on asymmetrical power relations—because pedagogical contexts are inherently political, we have a unique opportunity to promote real change. Trifonas 03,

PETER PERICLES TRIFONAS. PEDAGOGIES OF DIFFERENCE: RETHINKING EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE/ RoutledgeFalmer. New York, London. 2003. Questia.

Just as objective social reality exists not by chance, but as the product of action, so it is not transformed by chance. If men[/women] produce social reality (which in the “inversion of praxis” turns back upon them and conditions them), then transforming that reality is an historical task, a task for men[/women]. Reality which becomes oppressive results in the contradistinction of men[/women] as oppressors and oppressed. The latter, whose task it is to struggle for their liberation together with those who show true solidarity, must acquire a critical awareness of oppression through the praxis of this struggle. One of the gravest obstacles to the achievement of liberation is that oppressive reality absorbs those within it and thereby acts to submerge men's[/women's] consciousness. Functionally oppression is domesticating. To no longer be prey to its force one must emerge from it and turn upon it. This can be done only by means of the praxis: reflection and action upon the world in order to transform it. (36)In this passage we see the fundamental importance that Freire places on the development of a critical consciousness of social existence. An end to oppression, which is the fundamental objective of Freire's call for a socially transformative praxis, requires that men and women have the ability to perceive their existence in the world. He argues that their action in the world is largely determined by the way they see themselves within it, and that a correct perception necessitates of an ongoing reflection on their world. For Freire it is neither the mere action nor the mere reflection and critical consciousness of men and women that will transform the world and end oppression. This can only be achieved through “praxis: the action and reflection of men in the world in order to transform it” (66). The ability to perceive correctly and arrive at a critical consciousness of the world, however, does not come automatically; it is itself the product of praxis. From this position Freire argues for an educational practice (a pedagogical praxis) that engages with the oppressed in reflection that leads to action on their concrete reality. He calls for a pedagogy that makes oppression and its causes objects of a reflection that will allow the oppressed to develop a consciousness of “their necessary engagement in the struggle for their liberation” (33). Freire clearly articulates the essential importance of critical consciousness to transformative action that is liberating: In order for the oppressed to be able to wage the struggle for their liberation, they must perceive the reality of oppression not a closed world from which there is no exit, but as a limiting situation which they can transform. This perception is a necessary but not a sufficient condition for liberation; it must become the motivating force for liberating action. (34) He attributes to education an essential role in the development of developing critical consciousness that Freire ascribes to education: In problem posing education, men and women develop their power to perceive critically the way they exist in the world with which and in which they find themselves. They come to see the world not as static reality, but as reality in process, in transformation. Although the dialectical relations of men with the world exist independently of how these relations are perceived (or whether or not they are perceived at all) it is also true that the form of action men adopt is to a large extent a function of how they perceived themselves in the world. Hence the teacher-student and the student**s-**teachers reflect multaneously on themselves and the world without dichotomizing this reflection from action, and thus establish an authentic form of thought and action**.** (71) From Freire we understand that a social transformation that works in the interests of working-class indigenous and nonwhite peoples necessitates a critical consciousness of social existence and the possibility of its transformation. We argue that a critical decolonizing consciousness is fundamental to the transformation of the internal neocolonial condition of social existence in the contemporary United States. One need only consider the level of post-September 11 patriotism and expressed belief in official rhetoric (about America's moral righteousness and freedom loving and defending tradition) among working-class indigenous and nonwhite people to see the degree to which our internal neocolonial condition has “submerged” the consciousness of men and women who live and experience the effects of that condition on a daily basis. The vast majority of working-class indigenous and nonwhite people in the contemporary United States cannot see the extent to which the essence of the colonialism that made them English-speaking, Christian individuals continues to define their social existence. We agree with Freire that how men and women act in the world is largely related to how they perceive themselves in the world, and thus we understand that the existent potential to transform our internal neocolonial condition will remain unrealized if we fail to appropriately perceive and develop a critical consciousness of this condition and its possible undoing. A social transformation that ends our neocolonial oppression and exploitation in American society will require a cycle of emancipatory thought, action, and reflection-in other words, a praxiological cycle. We build on Freire and contend that critical consciousness is developed through the struggle against internal neocolonialism both in the classroom and the larger social context. Critical pedagogy has put forth the notion that classroom practice integrates particular curriculum content and design, instructional strategies and techniques, and forms of evaluation. It argues that these specify a particular version about what knowledge is of most worth, what it means to know something, and how we might construct a representation of our world and our place within it (McLaren 1998). From this perspective, the pedagogical is inherently political. For us a decolonizing pedagogy encompasses both an anticolonial and decolonizing notion of pedagogy and an anticolonial and decolonizing pedagogical praxis. It is an anticolonial and decolonizing theory and praxis that insists that colonial domination and its ideological frameworks operate and are reproduced in and through the curricular content and design, the instructional practices, the social organization of learning, and the forms of evaluation that inexorably sort and label students into enduring categories of success and failure of schooling. Thus, an anticolonial and decolonizing pedagogical praxis explicitly works to transform these dimensions of schooling so that schools become sites for the development of a critical decolonizing consciousness and activity that work to ameliorate and ultimately end the mutually constitutive forms of violence that characterize our internal neocolonial condition. For us, a decolonizing pedagogy addresses both the means and the ends of schooling.

#### And, critical pedagogy is the strongest internal link into education in any context—class relations are present within any discussion. Trifonas 03 continues,

PETER PERICLES TRIFONAS. PEDAGOGIES OF DIFFERENCE: RETHINKING EDUCATION FOR SOCIAL CHANGE/ RoutledgeFalmer. New York, London. 2003. Questia.

If we superimpose my formulation of “power as relation” on the discussion concerning race, gender, class, and ability as relations, we then begin to see how we may work with social differences simultaneously. When I assert that sexism, racism, and classism are relations of domination and subordination, I imply that they are relations of power. In an educational context, the exercise of power is accomplished in interactions (i.e., in a social organization), manifesting itself as acts of exclusion, marginalization, silencing, and so forth. Thus, paying attention to how power operates along axes of gender, race, class, and ability (that is, recognizing that social differences are not given, but are accomplished in and through educational settings) is a step toward educational equity. What does the above discussion mean in the educational context? It means that in the interactions of teachers with students in the classroom, or in other contexts, attention needs to be directed toward how dominant and subordinate relations (be they based on race, gender, class, or ability) permeate these contexts and intersect in complicated ways to produce inequality and marginalization. The frequently used and well-meaning phrase, “I treat everyone the same, ” often used by teachers and administrators to indicate their lack of bias in a diverse educational setting, in fact masks unequal power relations. Similarly, educational policies that assume that people are the same or equal may serve to entrench existing inequality precisely because people enter into the educational process with different and unequal experiences. These attempts, well meaning though they may be, tend to render inequality invisible, and thus work against equity in education. In her exploration of white privilege in higher education in the United States, Frances Rains (1998), an aboriginal-Japanese American woman, states emphatically that these benign acts are disempowering for the minority person because they erase his or her racial identity. The denial of racism in this case is in fact a form of racism. Thus, in moving toward equity in education that allows us to address multiple and intersecting axes of difference and inequality, I recommend that we try to think and act “against the grain” in developing educational policies and handling various kinds of pedagogical situations. 5 To work against the grain is to recognize that education is not neutral; it is contested. Mohanty puts it as such: … [E]ducation represents both a struggle for meaning and a struggle over power relations. [It is] a central terrain where power and politics operate out of the lived culture of individuals and groups situated in asymmetrical social and political positions. (Mohanty 1990:184) We need to develop a critical awareness of the power dynamics operative in institutional relations-and of the fact that people participate in institutions as unequal subjects. Working against the grain is to take a proactive approach to understanding and acting upon institutional relations, whether in the classroom, in other interactions with students, or in policy development. Rather than overlooking the embeddedness of gender, race, class, ability, and other forms of inequality that shape our interactions, working against the grain makes explicit the political nature of education and how power operates to privilege, silence, and marginalize individuals who are differently located in the educational process. In her exploration of feminist pedagogy, Linda Briskin (1990) makes a clear distinction between nonsexist and antisexist education critical to our understanding here. She asserts that nonsexism is an approach that attempts to neutralize sexual inequality by pretending that gender can be made irrelevant in the classroom. Thus, for instance, merely asserting that male and female students should have equal time to speak-and indeed giving them equal time-cannot adequately rectify the endemic problem of sexism in the classroom. One of Briskin's students reported that in her political science tutorials that when the male students spoke, everyone paid attention. When a female student spoke, however, the class acted as if no one was speaking (13). Neutrality is an attempt to conceal the unequal distribution of power. An against the grain approach would acknowledge explicitly that we are all gendered, racialized, and differently constructed subjects who do not participate in interactional relations as equals. This goes beyond formulating sexism, racism, abilism, and class privilege in individualist terms and treating them as if they were personal attitudes. Terry Wolverton (1983) discovered the difference between nonracism and antiracism in her consciousness-raising attempt: I had confused the act of trying to appear not to be racist with actively working to eliminate racism. Trying to appear not racist had made me deny my racism, and therefore exclude the possibility of change. (191) Being against the grain means seeing inequality as systemic and interpersonal (rather than individual), and combatting oppression as a collective responsibility, not just as a personal attribute (so that somehow a person can cleanse herself or himself of sexism, racism, abilism, or class bias). It is to pay attention to oppression as an interactional property that can be altered (see Manners 1998). Roger Simon (1993) suggests, in his development of a philosophical basis for teaching against the grain, which shares many commonalities in how I think about an integrative approach to equity in education, that teaching against the grain is fundamentally a moral practice. By this he does not mean that teachers simply fulfill the mandate and guidelines of school authorities. He believes that teachers must expose thepartial and imperfect nature of existing knowledge, which is constructed on the basis of asymmetrical power relations (for instance, who has the power to speak and whose voices are suppressed?). It is the responsibility of the teacher or educator to show how dominant forms of knowledge and ways of knowing constrict human capacities. In exposing the power relations integral to the knowledge construction process, the educator, by extension, must treat teaching and learning as a mutual and collaborative act between teachers and students. What may this ideal look like in practice? Marilyn Cochran-Smith (1991) also explores the notion of teaching against the grain in her research on how teachers and students worked together in a preservice program in the Philadelphia area. Borrowing from Gramsci's formulation that action is everyone's responsibility, she asserts that teaching is fundamentally a political activity. In practical terms, she outlines what it may mean to teach against the grain in an actual teaching and learning situation. Her succinct articulation is worth quoting at length: To teach against the grain, teachers have to understand and work both within and around the culture of teaching and the politics of schooling at their particular schools and within their larger school system and communities. They cannot simply announce better ways of doing things, as outsiders are likely to do. They have to teach differently without judging the ways other teach or dismissing the ideas others espouse…. [They] are not at liberty to publicly announce brilliant but excoriating critiques of their colleagues and the bureaucracies in which they labor. Their ultimate commitment is to the school lives and futures of the children with whom they live and work. Without condescension or defensiveness, they have to work with parents and other teachers on different ways of seeing and measuring development, connecting and dividing knowledge, and knowing about teaching and schooling. They have to be astute observers of individual learners with the ability to pose and explore questions that transcend cultural attribution, institutional habit, and the alleged certainty of outside experts. They have to see beyond and through the conventional labels and practices that sustain the status quo by raising unanswerable and often uncomfortable questions. Perhaps most importantly, teachers who work against the grain must name and wrestle with their own doubts, must fend off the fatigue of reform and depend on the strength of their individual and collaborative convictions that their work ultimately makes a difference in the fabric of social responsibility. (Cochran-Smith 1991:284-85) For me, to be against the grain is therefore to recognize that the routinized courses of action and interactions in all educational contexts are imbued with unequal distribution of power that produce and reinforce various forms of marginalization and exclusion. Thus, a commitment to redress these power relations (i.e., equity in education) involves interventions and actions that may appear “counter-intuitive.” 6 Undoing inequality and achieving equity in education is a risky and uncomfortable act because we need to disrupt the ways things are “normally” done. This involves a serious (and frequently threatening) effort to interrogate our privilege as well as our powerlessness. It obliges us to examine our own privilege relative though it may be, to move out of our internalized positions as victims, to take control over our lives, and to take responsibilities for change. It requires us to question what we take for granted, and a commitment to a vision of society built on reflection, reform, mutuality, and respect in theory and in practice. Teaching and learning against the grain is not easy, comfortable, or safe. It is protracted, difficult, uncomfortable, painful, and risky. It involves struggles with our colleagues, our students, as well as struggles within ourselves against our internalized beliefs and normalized behaviors. In other words, it is a lifelong challenge. However, as Simon (1993) puts it, teaching against the grain is also a project of hope. We engage in it with the knowledge and conviction that we are in a long-term collaborative project with like-minded people whose goal is to make the world a better place for us and for our children.

#### We have an obligation to embrace critical pedagogy. McLaren et al 04,

McLaren et al. 2004Peter McLaren is a Professor and Gregory Martin and Nathalia Jaramillo are doctoral students, all in the Division of Urban Schooling of the Graduate School of Education and Information Studies @ UCLA. Ramin Farahmandpur is an assistant professor in the Department of Educational Policy, Foundations, and Administrative Studies @ Portland State University “Teaching in and against the Empire: Critical Pedagogy as Revolutionary Praxis” Teacher Education Quarterly 2004 - Volume 31, Number 1

In creating the conditions for social change, then, the best pedagogy recognizes the limits of traditional ‘pragmatist’ reformist pedagogical practice by prioritizing the need to question the deeper problems, particularly the violent contradictions (e.g., the gap between racism and the American Dream), under which students are forced to live. This means confronting the anti-intellectual thuggery that pervades teacher education programs, particularly the kind that “rejects ‘theory’ (the knowledge of totality)” (Zavarzadeh & Morton, 1994, p. 3). Acknowledging that capitalist education acts as a drag on the development of ‘critical’ or ‘class’ consciousness by presenting a lifeless world empty of contradictions, we argue for a Marxist theory of the ‘big picture,’ which enables people to translate their daily free-floating frustrations with the ‘system’ into a set of ideas, beliefs and practices that provide the basis not only for coherence and explanation but also action (Zavarzadeh & Morton, 1994, p. 3). Against tremendous odds, the challenge over the last several decades has been to humanize the classroom environment and to create pedagogical spaces for linking education to the praxiological dimensions of social justice initiatives and to that end we are indebted to critical pedagogy. Yet, faced with the urgency for change, approaching social transformation through the optic of revolutionary critical pedagogy ratchets up the struggle ahead. Revolutionary critical pedagogy dilates the aperture that critical pedagogy has struggled to provide teachers and students over the last several decades by further opening up the pedagogical encounter to its embeddedness in globalized social relations of exploitation and also to the revolutionary potential of a transnational, gender-balanced, multiracial, antiimperialist struggle. A revolutionary critical pedagogy raises the following questions for consideration by teachers, students, and other cultural workers: How can we liberate the use value of human beings from their subordination to exchangevalue? How can we convert what is least functional about ourselves as far as the abstract utilitarian logic of capitalist society is concerned — our self-realizing, sensuous, species-being — into our major instrument of self-definition? How can we make what we represent to capital — replaceable commodities — subordinate to who we have also become as critical social agents of history? How can we make critical self-reflexivity a demarcating principle of who we are and critical global citizenship the substance of what we want to become? How can we make the cultivation of a politics of hope and possibility a radical end in itself? How can we de-commodify our subjectivities? How can we materialize our self-activity as a revolutionary force and struggle for the self-determination of free and equal citizens in a just system of appropriation and distribution of social wealth? How can we make and remake our own nature within historically specific conventions of capitalist society such that we can make this self-activity a revolutionary force to dismantle capitalism itself and create the conditions for the development of our full human potential? How can we confront our ‘producers’ (i.e., social relations of production, the corporate media, cultural formations and institutional structures) as an independent power? Completely revolutionizing education does not depend upon the great white men that capitalist education teaches us are our presidents, heroes and role models. It relies upon the broad masses of people recognizing that the whole system is worthless and must be transformed to reflect their interests. This is the strength of a revolutionary critical pedagogy, that it is an orientation of fighting for the interests of the multi-racial, gendered working class and indigenous peoples all the way through. It seeks to transform schools into political and cultural centers, where crucial questions — from international affairs to education policy — are debated and struggled over openly. It is a pedagogy that not only conjures up the audacious urges of the oppressed but also enables them to fight back against the system’s repeated attacks by raising people’s understanding of their political opponents and developing their organization and fighting position. It is a call to battle, a challenge to change this monstrous system that wages permanent warfare against the world and the planet, from cost-effectiveness state terror in the ‘homeland,’ to the dumping of toxic chemicals on Native American lands and communities of color and the devastating bombing campaigns against sovereign nations. It is a pedagogy of hope that is grounded in the unfashionable ‘reality,’ history, and optimism of oppressed peoples and nations inside and outside of this country. It is a pedagogy against empire. Because of this, we will settle for nothing less.

#### Student education is uniquely crucial to successfully overthrow capitalism. Marcuse 72,

Marcuse, German philosopher and sociologist, 1972 [Herbert, Counterrevolution and Revolt, P. 54-56]

<The dominion of this democracy still leaves room for the building of autonomous local bases. The increasing tech­nological-scientific requirements of production and control make the universities into such a base: first for the system itself, as training schools for its cadres, but also, on the same grounds, schools for the education of future counter-cadres. It is still imperative to combat the political inferiority complex widespread among the student movement: the notion that the students are "only" intellectuals, a privileged "elite" and thus a subordinate force which can become effective only if it aban­dons its own position. This notion is offensive to those who have sacrificed their lives, who continue to risk those lives in every demonstration against the powers that be. If, in the Third World, the students are indeed a revolutionary avant-garde, if they are by the thousands the victims of the terror, then their role in the fight for liberation indicates a feature of the global revolution in the making, namely, the decisive force of a radical consciousness. In the Third World, the militant stu­dents directly articulate the rebellion of the people; in the ad­vanced capitalist countries, where they do not (yet) have this avant-gardistic function, their privileged position allows (and commits) them to develop such consciousness in theory and practice on their own base—the base of departure for the larger fight. Caught up in its fetishism of labor, the student movement is still reluctant (if not simply refusing) to "admit" that, on the campuses, it has its own base in the infrastructure itself. Moreover, this base extends from the campuses to the economic and political institutions where "educated labor" is needed. To be sure, within these institutions, the higher placed cadres will be committed to them, will become part of the hier­archy. But their deteriorating position and chances will weaken this commitment and sharpen the conflict within their education, between the liberating capabilities and the actual servitude of science and technology. However, the solution of this conflict will never be the result of the internal develop­ment of science: the new scientific revolution will be part of the social revolution. To extend the base of the student movement, Rudi Dutschke has proposed the strategy of the long march through the institutions: working against the established institutions while working in them, but not simply by `boring from within," rather by "doing the job," learning (how to program and read computers, how to teach at all levels of education, how to use the mass media, how to organize production, how to recognize and eschew planned obsolescence, how to design, et cetera), and at the same time preserving one's own con­sciousness in working with the others. The long march includes the concerted effort to build up counterinstitutions. They have long been an aim of the move­ment, but the lack of funds was greatly responsible for their weakness and their inferior quality. They must be made com­petitive. This is especially important for the development of radical, "free" media. The fact that the radical Left has no equal access to the great chains of information and indoctrination is largely responsible for its isolation. Similarly with the development of independent schools and "free universities." They can be competitive, that is to say, apt to counteract Establishment education, only where they fill a vacuum or where their quality is not only different but also superior. The collection of large funds for the operation of effective counter-institutions requires compromises. The time of the wholesale rejection of the "liberals" has passed—or has not yet come. Radicalism has much to gain from the "legitimate" protest against the war, inflation, and unemployment, from the de­fense of civil rights—even perhaps from a "lesser evil" in local elections. The ground for the building of a united front is shift­ing and sometimes dirty—but it is there . . . I have stressed the key role which the universities play in the present period: they can still function as institutions for the training of counter-cadres. The "restructuring" necessary for the attainment of this goal means more than decisive student participation and nonauthoritarian learning. Making the uni­versity "relevant" for today and tomorrow means, instead, pre­senting the facts and forces that made civilization what it is today and what it could be tomorrow—and that is political education. For history indeed repeats itself; it is this repetition of domination and submission that must be halted, and halting it presupposes knowledge of its genesis and of the ways in which it is reproduced: critical thinking.

### Link: Wages

#### Wages are the defining feature of capitalism—a tool to distribute minimal financial compensation relative to the contribution of workers as a tool to centralize power with the elite. Changes in the quantity of the wage merely mask the problem of capitalism. Price ‘05

Understanding Capitalism Part III: Wages and Labor Markets By R.G. Price - January 11, 2005http://www.rationalrevolution.net/articles/capitalism\_wages.htm

We often see "capitalism" defined as a system based on the private ownership of the means of production. Capitalism is about much more than this however. One of the major defining features of capitalist economy is the use of wage-labor and the existence of labor markets. Understanding the role of labor markets in capitalism is critical, and this is best achieved by understanding the historical development of capitalist economy. Historical Emergence of Capitalism. Capitalism as we know it today began to emerge as an economic system in the 1700s, but capitalism as we know it did not become a dominant force until the 1800s. The first place where modern capitalist economy developed was in England. Capitalism grew out of feudalism and mercantilism. During feudal times production of goods was done primarily at the individual level. Commodities were produced by individual craftsmen, who were typically members of guilds. Individuals owned their own means of production. At this time labor markets were inconsequential in the economy. People were not generally "employed" to work. People produced commodities or offered services as workers, but what they were compensated for was the goods or services directly. For example, a blacksmith was not employed by a company or group to make horseshoes at an hourly rate, the blacksmith made tools and horseshoes and he sold these items directly. He was paid for the products that he produced. His income was derived from selling his goods. Guilds were organizations of workmen, who worked, trained, and often lived together. Guilds had a number of their own problems, such as restricting membership and requiring several years of unpaid, or lowly paid, apprenticeship, however, guilds served as a strong community base for workers and enforced codes of conduct and standards of quality. Merchants would go to various independent producers and buy their goods from them and then trade or sell those goods at a market. Wage-labor was rare at this point. Merchants didn't control the means of production, individuals did. The system was not based on the accumulation of capital. What little wage-labor did exist was typically regulated by the guilds. Capitalism really began to emerge after the British Agricultural Revolution of the 1720s, when advances in agriculture meant that fewer people were needed to produce food so many peasants were cast off of the land that they worked. As the feudal system was being ended, previously communal land began to be privatized and the peasants had no title to the land so they became homeless and jobless. This was when wage-labor began to come into more prominent use in the cities, as peasants flooded the cities looking for work. Shortly after, advances in mechanization also took place. As this happened the merchant class evolved into the capitalist class through the building of factories and the employment of workers to produce products directly for them. It was this accumulation of capital by entrepreneurs that gave rise to the term capitalism, though this term did not come into use until the mid 1800s. The principle characteristic of capitalism is that rights to ownership of newly created value were seen as coming from ownership of the tools used to create the value as opposed to the labor used to create the value, as had traditionally been the view. The textile industry is one of the important industries in the development of capitalism. Pre-capitalist home-based weaver In the 1700s the textile industry was one of the most important industries in Britain. The way that textiles were typically made in the early 1700s was that a family would farm the materials to be used in making cloth, such as wool or cotton, then they would use their own spinning wheels and other tools to produce the cloth at home. Special merchants, called clothiers, would travel from village to village buying the cloth, which was then sold to tailors and other buyers. Clothiers making rounds As you can see, this certainly involved private ownership of the means of production, yet, this was not a capitalist economy. The people were not "employed". The people did not work for anyone else (well technically they worked for the king). The concentration of capital was not the modus operandi of industry. People lived and worked at home, they produced goods, and their "income" was a product, directly, of the goods that they produced. Individuals owned and controlled their own means of production and thus they owned the products of their own labor. In 1764 the Spinning Jenny was invented, and this labor saving device enabled spinners to produce thread more quickly. At that time a few merchants began setting up their own small "factory" type establishments and employing small groups of women to produce thread for them, but this was still a rare situation. Spinning Jenny In 1771 Richard Arkwright setup the first true factory system, which used spinning machines operated by a water driven wheel. These textile factories employed large numbers of people, mostly children. Two thirds of Arkwright's "employees" were children, and Arkwright employed children as young as 6 years old. Arkwright built cottages next to his factories where displaced peasants came to live and work for him, and he specifically preferred large families with many young children. These peasants had no property and no money and so were willing to work for Arkwright and put their children to work in the factory in order to avoid starvation.This, effectively, can be viewed as the beginning of modern capitalism. Arkwright's system proved so productive that the independent home producers were no longer able to compete, and were driven to give up their independent work at home in the villages to move to the cities and work in factories. Arkwright became so successful that within a relatively short period of time he was able to fix the price of cotton twists, to which all other makers conformed. Even at this point, though, wage-labor was not a widespread condition, it was still in its infancy. Over time, however, industry after industry moved from the old ways of independent production by individuals, craftsmen, and guilds, to the collective production of wage-labor capitalism. The independent means were of course less efficient, and it was the increases in efficiency, which the capitalists embraced and promoted, that forced individuals to give up their independence to work for wages, which were typically lower than their previous incomes. This is important to understand, because capitalism is not just about private ownership of the means of production, indeed it is about the private ownership of the means of production, the private concentration of capital, and the employment of wage-labor. The result of capitalism is that labor went from being seen as the source of property rights to being a commodity, and instead capital ownership became seen as the source of rights to newly created property. With the capitalist system, labor is a commodity, no different than raw materials. It's one more thing that capitalists factor into their budget as a part of the cost of production. Just like other raw materials, the price of labor becomes market driven. The Meaning of Labor Markets Under the capitalist system workers are no longer paid for the value of what they produce, nor do they retain rights to ownership of what they produce, instead they are paid by how little compensation someone else is willing to do the same job for. Just as it is understood that market competition drives the price of other commodities down, it has the same impact on labor when labor is a commodity. Labor markets and other commodity markets are two separate and distinct markets. By separating the cost of labor from the value of labor, capitalists are able to increase profits. Profits are generated in part by the difference between the cost of labor and the value that the labor has created, as Adam Smith himself stated. Though the manufacturer has his wages advanced to him by his master, he, in reality, costs him no expense, the value of those wages being generally restored, together with a profit, in the improved value of the subject upon which his labor is bestowed. - Adam Smith; The Wealth of Nations By having separate markets the demand for jobs creates different pricing on labor than the demand for goods and services creates on the products of labor. It separates people from the value of what they produce, so no matter how much value a worker creates, their wages are governed by the labor market, not what they produce. With two different markets the criterion for compensation is completely changed. Wage-laborers don't receive the "fruits of their labor" - instead they are paid by "job performance". Job performance is judged, not in relation to the product of the worker's labor, but in relation to other workers in the market. Thus, under the capitalist system, workers' incomes become socialized. This is important for understanding how corporations work today. One way to describe a corporation is as an organization of individuals. All employees of a corporation are wage-laborers, even the CEO, although executives also typically get part ownership in the corporation via shares of stock and they have control over the corporation. CEOs play the role of both capitalists and wage-laborers. Most employees, however, are just wage-laborers. The way that corporate wage-labor works is that all of the employees work together as a team to create value. It becomes virtually impossible to determine exactly how much value each individual contributes to the sum total of value created by the corporation however and workers do not retail ownership rights to the products of their labor. There is absolutely nothing in capitalist (neoclassical) economic theory that even attempts to compensate employees by the "real" contribution made. Capitalist economic theory dictates that wages are determined by labor markets, so how much each employee gets paid is not determined by their contribution, but rather by the market value of their labor. There is no way to determine who is really responsible for the value created. The market value of each employee's labor is determined basically by how much other people in the market are willing to sell their labor for.

#### The valorization of wage labor shuts off resistance to capitalism by emphasizing self-reliance and legitimizing the myth of capitalist utopia, counteracting liberation. The living wage is the operative logic of capitalism. Barchiesi ‘12

 Barchiesi 12 Franco Barchiesi. “Liberation of, through, or from w ork? Postcolonial Africa and the problem w ith “job creation” in the global crisis.” Interface, Volume4 (2): 230 – 253 (November 2012)

The policy centrality of job creation operates as a device that disciplines popular values and conducts while fusing the imperatives of accumulation and governance. It makes the precarious multitudes generated by the systemic violence of globalized corporate capital governable by recoding desire around production and displacing it from a critique of that very violence. Should such a critique express itself, it might conversely lead to claims for a decent life, sustained by adequate forms of redistribution and decommodification, regardless to one’s employment status. The idealization of employment as the cornerstone of inclusive citizenship is premised on a combination of moral and socio-scientific reasoning – the praise of self-reliance and responsibility blended with purportedly self-evident considerations of social and fiscal sustainability – that for Margaret Somers and Fred Block (2005) defines its “epistemic privilege” as impervious to empirical counterevidence. It is on these premises that, despite the unrewarding, insecure, and fretful reality accompanying for the precariat the job-seeking imperative, “decent work” has acquired center stage in the imagination of the International Labour Organization (ILO) and many self- defined progressive governments as a sensible, practical policy option. Yet, as Peter Waterman (2005) argues, the “decent work” agenda is a purely normative and prescriptive assertion, bankrolled by trade unions and left-liberal technocrats in the desperate quest for policy relevance after having been overwhelmed by the ruthlessness of economic liberalization. It consists of the protestation that a return to a mythical, universalized protected labor force with benefits and rights can indeed square the circle of enhancing human dignity, enabling growth, building communities, and equipping workers with tools to compete in unforgivingly flexible labor markets. One can indeed doubt, Waterman continues, the historical plausibility of this working-class mythology as its ostensible protagonists were often instead, in practical terms, male and white producers of imperial societies that imposed unfree labor to colonized peoples and unpaid women in the household. Instead of taking stock of this problematic genealogy, Waterman concludes, the “decent work” idea projects into the future its assumptive logic according to which it is in the nature of capitalist globalization to obviously evolve, in conditions of liberal democracy, in a gender-sensitive, worker-friendly, environmentally sustainable direction. At the same time, precisely because it draws its legitimacy from the purely imaginative premise of a capitalism with a human face and a moral conscience, “decent work” disallows an understanding of the power relations underpinning actually existing liberalization and the reasons why it makes work indecent for so many. It therefore forecloses other discursive virtualities– such as the idea that a decent life can be autonomous from labor and work ethics altogether – as it dispatches the liberation “from” and not only “of” work to the ranks of utopian reasoning. “Decent work” is thus a typical example of a “feeling, analysis, or relationship that has been rendered thing like and frozen”, the “mournful attachment” to which constitutes for Wendy Brown the stuff of progressive melancholia. In more practical terms, the glorification of work in the decline of neoliberalism maintains a sturdy allegiance to old narratives of modernity as the unlimited development of the forces of production, whereas a crisis of employment is essentially defined by joblessness and measured through the unemployment rate. It is, conversely, hard for this modality of thought to locate employment crises in the predicament of the working poor and the unyielding policy- determined compulsion to rely on poverty wages as the primary means of survival. It is even harder for the left, as long as it confines itself in such policy and discursive strictures, to differentiate its demands for work from a mainstream rationality and commonsense exalting low wages as a path from poverty to personal responsibility and empowerment. It is precisely in such a conundrum that ideas of “decent work” show their practical and political limitations as they are constantly expected to recede in front of what conservative opinion calls the more realistic alternative between any job, at any condition, or no job at all.

#### The struggle for higher wages pits some working class groups against one another due to their different reserve wages – that prevents effective class-organizing. Dasgupta 09 summarizes the argument

Indraneel Dasgupta, lecturer at University of Nottingham, author of about 30 research papers and referee of about 20 journals, researcher at Indian Statistical Institute, “‘Living’ wage, class conflict and ethnic strife,” Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization 72 (2009) 750–765

Our exploration suggests that advanced workers may, indirectly, benefit from improved social entitlements for backward workers. Thus, we provide micro-foundations for an argument of class solidarity between advanced and backward workers, grounded in an ‘enlightened’ (i.e. general equilibrium) conception of self interest. However, our analysis also suggests that such an argument may be difficult to extend beyond the sphere of social entitlements to that of ‘labour rights’. Specifically, our results suggest that working class (say minority or immigrant) communities with weak entitlements may share an interest, with employers and against workers from privileged communities, in keeping labour regulations (and thus the social wage) relatively low. Affirmative action programs that seek to open up larger sections of the labour market to workers from marginalized ethnic, racial or religious communities may pit such groups against workers from the dominant community, benefiting employers. Thus, when ethnic minority or immigrant workers are initially marginalized both in the labour market and in access to non-wage entitlements, improving job access (say, through positive discriminatory job quotas) and expanding ‘social enfranchisement’ (say, through improved housing, health, child-support and unemployment benefits) for such workers may have contradictory effects on class and ethnic conflicts. Lastly, our analysis suggests that the politics of ‘trade unionism’, i.e. articulation of shared objective economic interests alone, may prove insufficient to control ethnic conflicts within the working class. A working class politics that also ventures into the provisioning of class-cultural public goods, i.e. of noneconomic forms of shared identity articulation specific to the working class as a whole, may have better prospects.

#### The aff is a pale guarantee that a solution is just on the horizon, a palliative engineered to appease the masses into the false hope of salvation to hold off the capitalist revolution. Eagleton 11

Terry Eagleton, prominent British literary theorist, critic and public intellectual. He is currently Distinguished Professor of English Literature at Lancaster University, Professor of Cultural Theory at the National University of Ireland and Distinguished Visiting Professor of English Literature at The University of Notre Dame, “Why Marx Was Right,” Yale University, New Haven and London, 2011.

He is talking, then, about what free men and women are bound to do under certain circumstances. But this is surely a contradiction, since freedom means that there is nothing that you are bound to do. You are not bound to devour a succulent pork chop if your guts are being wrenched by agonizing hunger pains. As a devout Muslim, you might prefer to die. If there is only one course of action I can pos- sibly take, and if it is impossible for me not to take it, then in that situation I am not free. Capitalism may be teetering on the verge of ruin, but it may not be socialism that replaces it. It may be fascism, or barbarism. Perhaps the working class will be too enfeebled and demoralized by the crumbling of the system to act constructively. In an uncharacteristically gloomy moment, Marx reflects that the class struggle may result in the “common ruination” of the contending classes. Or—a possibility that he could not fully anticipate—the system might fend off political insurrection by reform. Social democracy is one bulwark between itself and disaster. In this way, the surplus reaped from developed productive forces can be used to buy off revolution, which does not fit at all neatly into Marx’s historical scheme. He seems to have believed that capitalist prosperity can only be temporary; that the system will eventually founder; and that the working class will then inevitably rise up and take it over. But this, for one thing, passes over the many ways (much more sophisticated in our own day than in Marx’s) in which even a capitalism in crisis can continue to secure the consent of its citizens. Marx did not have Fox News and the Daily Mail to reckon with.

### Link: Universal Ethics

#### And, ethical frameworks that dictate universal obligations ignore the inequality produced by the application of rules in class-divided societies—means attempts at universal ethics in a capitalist society are ineffective. Llorente ‘03

Renzo Llorente. “Maurice Cornforth’s Contribution to Marxist Metaethics.” NATURE, SOCIETY, AND THOUGHT Vol. 16, No. 3 (2003). http://homepages.spa.umn.edu/~marquit/nst163a.pdf

Let me begin with what is undoubtedly the central feature of Cornforth’s critique of analytic moral philosophy in *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy* (and a basic component of what I have called a Marxist metaethics), namely his insistence on the inherent injustice of attempting to universalize ethical norms in class-divided societies. Before reviewing the substance and scope of Cornforth’s criticism, however, it will be helpful to say a word about the principle of universalizability and its importance in ethics.In moral philosophy, or ethics (for our present purposes we may use the two terms synonymously), we say that a judgment is universalizable if, to quote R. M. Hare, “it logically commits the speaker to making a similar judgment about anything which is either exactly like the subject of the original judgment or like it in the relevant respects” (1963, 139, cited in Cornforth 1965, 214).8 Put more simply, this principle holds that “what is right (or wrong) for one person is right (or wrong) for any similar person in similar circumstances” (Singer 1999, 941); the mere fact that individuals differ from one another—as opposed to finding themselves in situations that are dissimilar (or being themselves dissimilar) *in a morally relevant sense*9—in and of itself never justifies the application of different moral standards or the imposition of different moral duties. Universal applicability is, according to this thesis, a formal feature of all moral principles, indeed, a necessary condition for any proposition or judgment to qualify as a moral principle. While the basic intuition reflected in this criterion was first explicitly developed by Immanuel Kant, we owe the stron- gest modern statement and elucidation of this principle to R. M. Hare, who is for this reason—and because of his stature as one of the leading figures in twentieth-century analytical moral philoso- phy—the main target of Cornforth’s criticism in the pages devoted to ethics within *Marxism and the Linguistic Philosophy*.Cornforth does not take exception to the principle of universalizability as such. To the contrary, he, like the great majority of contemporary philosophers, acknowledges its validity, noting that it “is a consequence of the essentially social natureof morality. . . . [I]t is simply the result of the fact that such principles are enunciated for the purpose of regulating social life” (1965, 235). The problem, argues Cornforth, concerns the contradiction between a demand for, and injunction to, universalizability as the guarantee of fairness and impartiality, on the one hand, and the inherent injustice and unfairness of seeking to universalize moral norms and precepts in class-divided societies. For the insistence on universalizability, save in a situation of rough equality of condition, imposes very different burdens on the agents subject to this demand, and thus proves inherently unfair, a violation of the fundamental moral precept, already formulated by Aristotle, of equality of treatment for equals.10 As Cornforth puts it, “How, in a class-divided society in which the profits of one class are derived from the labour of another, can public policies and social aims be judged by a criterion of universal acceptability?” (228). Or again, putting the same point a bit differently (i.e., in terms of *interests*): “Until all exploitation of man by man is ended, morality cannot be based on a generalised human standpoint, expressing a common human point of view and interest” (357). We shall return to Cornforth’s remarks on interests shortly. Before doing so, let us first consider Cornforth’s discussion of the consequences attending the attempt to comply with the imperative of universalizability in class-divided societies. As Cornforth shows, two outcomes are possible. On the one hand, insofar as determinate moral principles are established as universally valid and used to regulate social life, the result is the enshrinement of a system of moral rules that is intrinsically unfair and inevitably class-biased. As Cornforth observes, “Where there are class divisions and one class interest is dominant within the given form of association, the corresponding obligations and rights express the dominant class interest, and the corresponding moral code becomes class-biased, not a code of universal but of class-biased morality” (1965, 354).11 In other words, if class divisions preclude the rough equality of condition necessary for the principle of universalizability to function properly (i.e., impartially), then the prevailing moral code will normally comprise duties, obligations, and so on that favor the dominant classes,12 since their interests are sure to take precedence in a situation in which there exist divergent, mutually exclusive interests and they alone possess the economic and political resources to ensure that their interests prevail.13

### Link: Individual Ethics

#### And, frameworks that view each act in isolation and emphasize the responsibility of individuals over social responsibility undermine the fight against capitalism. Pepper ‘93

Pepper, doctorate in theoretical physics from St John's College, Oxford ,’93[David, Eco-Socialism: From Deep Ecology to Social Justice p. 141-145]

<Green political naivety is compounded by a stubborn overemphasis on the power of ideas—of value and attitude change and educational enlightenment—especially at the level of the individual. These, greens have consistently asserted, are what drives history and economics: The basic solutions involve dramatic and rapid changes in human attitudes, especially those relating to reproductive behaviour, economic growth technology, the environment and conflict resolution. (Ehrlich and Ehrlich 1972) This approach to social change starts from the assumption that one of the main determinants of a society’s structure and dynamics is the individual’s values, beliefs, attitudes and concerns. In other words, any change in individual values and attitudes will manifest as changes in all aspects of society. (MacNulty, in Ekins 1986) As we think, see, love and do, so our economies are. As we change the way we think, see, love and do, so our economies change. (Dauncey 1988) The consequence of this idealism is that insufficient political attention is given to the need to instigate changes in the mode of material production, and to how they can be effected in the light of the powerful vested interests in capitalism which will resist them. Idealistic individualism can breed an apparent selfishness or, at best, a naive conservatism, as is starkly illustrated by the response of New Age communards to questions on how to deal with exploitation and mass unemployment: Third world people are exploited. They can’t control this. But they can control how they feel. They can walk around in a victim consciousness or they can walk around enjoying everything. You go to Sri Lanka and you see the kids happy, happy, happy. You go to America and they’re not happy as a race…. You can be happy living in cardboard boxes. Don’t worry about unemployment. This and other problems will go away when enough people tune in to their spiritual benignness. They must not view poverty as a drudge but as a gift. Some of the best things in life are learned when you are poor. (cited in Pepper 1991, 110, 167) Thus, you create your own reality, which means your own oppression. ‘From this it follows that if you choose to believe that “I am no longer oppressed” then the oppression is suddenly gone’ (Sjoo 1992). Such sentiments illustrate how the whole New Age package is a mind-bending and soul-destroying enterprise, its main aim being to uphold present power relations…in practice, my observation is that radical politics are denounced as the distressed product of victim consciousness, while conservative ideology and practice are accepted without much question…. For, in essence, New Age philosophies fit very comfortably with laissez-faire individualistic Thatcherite economics…. When faced with problems of oppression or hostility, New Agers advise us to ‘just let go of your anger …of your emotional attachments to your cause…. Do not, for God’s sake, stay with your feelings of anger, distress or whatever, do not recognise their source and act on them, including fighting for social change’. (Francis 1991, 12-13) And this counter-revolutionary attitude is also inherent in the elevation of the individual as key actor in social change. Not only does this celebrate the central tenet in liberalism, it puts the onus for any lack of social or environmental improvement on to the individual. Thus, as Coward (1989) points out, alternative medicine meshes well with British Conservative government policy towards people’s health. For it suggests that when illness strikes, or improvement fails to come, the patient is to blame: for leading an unhealthy lifestyle, or for failing to exercise sufficient mental will to get better. As Francis puts it: For most ordinary people, if you got your foot deliberately stomped on you would speak out your pain and anger. For New Agers…the pain you experienced in your stomped-on foot was your own creation…. If you are suffering from crippling poverty, the solution is simple enough, because you, and you alone, are responsible for creating your own reality. …It is your victim consciousness that has created the illusion of poverty, disease, rape and genocide…. Your pain is suddenly your responsibility, nothing to do with external agents. How convenient for our oppressors! This displacement of responsibility means that your failure to think yourself better, or better off, or your failure to lead a sufficiently pure ecological lifestyle, can all lead to the ultimate triumph of the bourgeois weapon of guilt, after which disillusionment and withdrawal from the struggle is but a short step, and the personal ceases to be political any more (Pepper and Hallam 1988). The failure to set issues in a historical materialist context, i.e. in relation to changing modes of production, is most clearly illustrated in the population-resources issue. A historical approach to this is outlined in Chapter 3.5. An ahistorical approach by contrast refuses to ask what are the symptoms of supposed overpopulation, and why those symptoms could not be the outcome of poverty, unemployment and wealth maldistribution produced by capitalist productive relations. It continues the neo-Malthusian fixation of early 1970s’ limits-to-growth theorists, and still insists apocalyptically on the ‘reality of a finite planet’ and he unsurprising fact that exponential population growth, combined with increasing per capita consumption of resources combined with increasing destruction and exploitation of the natural environment, is unsustainable, is already resulting in calamity and will result in catastrophe sooner rather than later if current trends are not reversed. (Ekins 1986) Ahistoricism extends to a predilection for blaming ‘soul-destroying, lifedestroying industrialism’ or ‘the industrial paradigm’ (Porritt 1984) for the ‘crisis’, but not specifying its form. Does the fault lie in all industrial production, or could we, by adopting proper socialist arrangements, produce, transform nature, reap benefits from science and technology and have growth in needs satisfaction and in life quality: all without bringing on ecological crisis? Socialists unequivocally say ‘yes’: greens are frequently equivocal, vague or just confused. And there is often ahistoricism over technology. The 1970s’ environmentalist messages about technology have been repeated in the 1980s, say Goldman and O’Connor (1988, 92), and they slight or ignore ‘the problem of technology as the content and context of social domination, exploitation of labour and accumulation of capital’. Standard environmental texts on technology may assess it simply in terms of cost/risk-benefit analysis, or may see technological harm as a result of lack of appropriate values (Schumacher 1973). Neither approach relates technology to the specific production arrangements or relations of capitalism, or any other mode of production. Neither sees technology, in other words, as an embodiment of specific social relations. Some ecocentrism may be aware of the vested financial interests behind high technology, but it fails to follow this through by confronting the issue of how to reduce the power which big corporations have over it. Even radicals like Commoner, Carson and van den Bosch, while relating, ‘As in most liberal thought, the economic function of “bad” technology’ to ‘increased profits’ and simple greed and vested interests, do not realise that these explanations are too simple. The economic and social structure of capitalism, and how specific technologies serve the central aim of dominating and exploiting labour, must be addressed. Albury and Schwartz (1982) do in fact do this, showing how technologies as disparate as the Davy miners’ lamp, green revolution agriculture, and information technology were developed specifically to serve this exploitative aim. Neither they, nor any other technologies, are neutral, and the key issue is not just who controls them. The non-exploitative technology of ecological socialism would be a different technology from that of the capitalist mode of production. It is not just liberals, but many on the left who fail to grasp this. Making a similar point, Winner (1986, 64-6) accuses the alternative technology movement of mere ‘sociological tinkering’ rather than confronting capitalism. Thus Whole Earth Catalog was about technology, and avoided technological politics. Winner’s review of ‘New Age’ writers who focused centrally on technology—Marcuse, Mumford, Roszak, Goodman, Ellul—shows that they identified the problems as human aggressiveness, the machine mentality, the subject-object split, the obsession with technique, rational thought or the second law of thermodynamics. They did not face squarely, he says, the facts of organised political and social power, or examine technology’s history (as did Albury and Schwartz) to find out why some choices were made rather than others. Shying away from underlying socio-economic structures to concentrate instead on the surface manifestations of such structures: this postmodern weakness appears to extend from alternative technology to questions of scale and regionalism. Much ecocentrism identifies spatial reorganisation into small-scale communities (Sale 1985) as the key to an ecological society. Most geographers, however, would testify that **spatial form reflects socio-economic structure, not the other way around**. Hence any change to the former could not be sustained without accompanying or prior radical change in the latter. But **bioregionalism** (Chapter 4.5), in postmodern style, **mistakes the surface manifestation for the structural reality**. Thus, one of its gurus, Leopold Kohr (1957, 145) claimed that economic decline was the result of no particular economic system but of size. Production units and markets are too big, and business cycles ‘result from overgrowth’ rather than the converse. Marx’s only error was to attribute ‘to the system of capitalism what was solely due to the overgrowth of its institutions’ (p. 155). Modern disciples reiterate this view of size as a causal factor, advocating a green economics whose ‘…goals should be the decentralisation and democratisation of money and banking’ (Weston 1992), not their abolition. It follows that, for Marxists, **ecological improvement must be clearly related to a non-capitalist society**. They advocate not merely a redistribution of wealth but a socialist society, consisting of a free association of producers. This, says Hulsberg (1985) is what distinguishes eco-socialists from eco-libertarians: the latter have no fixed image of the economics of their desired society. ‘Industrialism’ is the problem: who owns the means of production is a secondary issue for them. >

**Emphasis on moral behavior prevents an examination of the amoral material forces of production that support capitalism—its focus on individual behavior and the obligations that individuals have prevents the social mobilization that overthrowing capitalism requires.**

### Link: Democracy/Polls

#### Prioritizing democracy frameworks is a way to neuter the revolution. Zizek ‘2K

Zizek, 2k1(“Repeating Lenin” Professor of Philosophy at the University of Ljubljana, Slavoj Zizek)

What are we to say to this? Again, the problem resides in the implicit qualifications which can be easily discerned by the "concrete analysis of the concrete situation," as Lenin himself would have put it. "**Fidelity to the democratic consensus" means the acceptance of the present liberal-parlamentary consensus, which precludes any serious questioning of how this liberal-democratic order is complicit in the phenomena it officially condemns, and, of course, any serious attempt to imagine a society whose socio-political order would be different. In short, it means: say and write whatever you want - on condition that what you do does not effectively question or disturb the predominant political consensus**. So **everything is allowed, solicited even, as a critical topic: the prospects of a global ecological catastrophe, violations of human rights, sexism, homophobia, antifeminism, the growing violence not only in the far-away countries, but also in our megalopolises, the gap between the First and the Third World, between the rich and the poor, the shattering impact of the digitalization of our daily lives... there is nothing easier today than to get international, state or corporate funds for a multidisciplinary research into how to fight the new forms of ethnic, religious or sexist violence. The problem is that all this occurs against the background of a fundamental** Denkverbot, the **prohibition to think. Today's liberal-democratic hegemony is sustained by a kind of unwritten** Denkverbot **(Prohibition to think)**  similar to the infamous Berufsverbot in Germany of the late 60s - **the moment one shows a minimal sign of engaging in political projects that aim to seriously challenge the existing order, the answer is immediately: "Benevolent as it is, this will necessarily end in a new Gulag!" The ideological function of the constant reference to the holocaust, gulag and the more recent Third World catastrophes is thus to serve as the support of this** Denkverbot**(Prohibition to think)** **by constantly reminding us how things may have been much worse:** **"Just look around and see for yourself what will happen if we follow your radical notions**!" And **it is exactly the same thing that the demand for "scientific objectivity" means: the moment one seriously questions the existing liberal consensus, one is accused of abandoning scientific objectivity for the outdated ideological positions.** **This is the point on which one cannot and should not concede:** today, the actual freedom of thought means the freedom to question the predominant liberal-democratic "post-ideological" consensus - or it means nothing.

### Link: Race

#### Mobilizing workers in a common economic struggle against employers can reduce ethnic conflicts – dividing lines according to race is self-defeating. Dasgupta 09 summarizes the argument

Indraneel Dasgupta, lecturer at University of Nottingham, author of about 30 research papers and referee of about 20 journals, researcher at Indian Statistical Institute, “‘Living’ wage, class conflict and ethnic strife,” Journal of Economic Behavior & Organization 72 (2009) 750–765

Conflict between workers across ethnic or religious divides is typically perceived as reducing their collective strength as a class in the common distributive conflict against employers.1 The key strategic question frequently facing political formations on the Left is thus how class unity among workers may be achieved in practice. At the same time, greater mobilization of workers in their common economic conflict against employers is also often considered an effective barricade against ethnic conflict within the working class. The idea appears to be that the very provision of a political platform for articulating common economic interests of workers would serve to reduce conflicts within the working class along identity fault-lines by revealing to them the ultimately self-defeating consequences of such ‘fratricidal’ warfare.2 Yet, in practice, attacks on one section of workers by another are often sought to be legitimized by the argument that the former are objectively advancing the interests of employers against those of the working class as a whole. Thus, for example, during the anti-immigrant riots in South Africa in May 2008, Black South Africans involved in the violence were reported as accusing foreigners of undoing years of fighting against white rule and undermining the minimum wage.3 Differences in reservation wage rates between native and immigrant workers impacted both class conflict between workers and employers and ethnic conflict among workers: these two dimensions of distributive conflict in turn conditioned one another.

#### Slavery was not based on racial antagonism but economic exploitation.  A myopic focus on racial violence elides this production relationship that constituted slavery—that prevents radical collective organizing. Reed ‘13

**Reed, professor of political science – University of Pennsylvania, ‘13**

(Adolph, “Django Unchained, or, The Help: How “Cultural Politics” Is Worse Than No Politics at All, and Why,” Nonsite Issue #9, February 25th, http://nonsite.org/feature/django-unchained-or-the-help-how-cultural-politics-is-worse-than-no-politics-at-all-and-why)

On reflection, it’s possible to see that **Django** Unchained **and The Help are** basically **different versions of the same movie. Both dissolve political economy** and social relations **into individual quests** and interpersonal transactions **and** thus effectively **sanitize**, respectively, **slavery and Jim Crow by dehistoricizing them.** The problem is not so much that each film invents cartoonish fictions; it’s that the point of the cartoons is to take the place of the actual relations of exploitation that anchored the regime it depicts. In The Help the buffoonishly bigoted housewife, Hilly, obsessively pushes a pet bill that would require employers of black domestic servants to provide separate, Jim Crow toilets for them; in Django Unchained the sensibility of 1970s blaxploitation imagines “comfort girls” and “Mandingo fighters” as representative slave job descriptions. **It’s as if Jim Crow had nothing to do with cheap labor and slavery had nothing to do with making slave owners rich.** And the point here is not just **that** they get the past wrong—it’s that the particular way they get it wrong enables them to get the present just as wrong **and** so **their politics are** as **misbegotten** as their history. Thus, for example, it’s only the dehistoricization that makes each film’s entirely neoliberal (they could have been scripted by Oprah) happy ending possible. The Help ends with Skeeter and the black lead, the maid Aibileen, embarking joyfully on the new, excitingly uncharted paths their book—an account of the master-servant relationship told from the perspective of the servants—has opened for them. But dehistoricization makes it possible not to notice the great distance between those paths and their likely trajectories. For Skeeter the book from which the film takes its name opens a career in the fast track of the journalism and publishing industry. Aibileen’s new path was forced upon her because the book got her fired from her intrinsically precarious job, more at-whim than at-will, in one of the few areas of employment available to working-class black women in the segregationist South—the precise likelihood that had made her and other maids initially reluctant to warm to Skeeter’s project. Yet Aibileen smiles and strides ever more confidently as she walks home because she has found and articulated her voice. The implication is that having been fired, rather than portending deeper poverty and economic insecurity, was a moment of liberation; Aibileen, armed with the confidence and self-knowledge conferred by knowing her voice, was now free to venture out into a world of unlimited opportunity and promise. This, of course, is pure neoliberal bullshit, of the same variety that permits the odious Michelle Rhee to assert with a straight face that teachers’ defined-benefit pensions deny them “choice” and thereby undermine the quality of public education. But who knows? Perhaps Skeeter brought with her from the 2000s an NGO to arrange microcredit that would enable Aibileen to start up a culturally authentic pie-making venture or a day spa for harried and stressed domestic servants. In the Jackson, Mississippi of 1963, no such options would exist for Aibileen. Instead, she most likely would be blackballed and unable to find a comparable menial job and forced to toil under even more undesirable conditions. Django Unchained ends with the hero and his lady fair riding happily off into the sunset after he has vanquished evil slave owners and their henchmen and henchwomen. Django and Broomhilda—whose name is spelled like that of the 1970s comic strip character, not the figure in Norse mythology, presumably a pointless Tarantino inside joke—are free. However, their freedom was not won by his prodigious bloodletting; it was obtained within the legal framework that accepted and regulated property rights in slaves. Each had been purchased and manumitted by the German bounty hunter who, as others have noted, is the only character in the film to condemn slavery as an institution. Django is no insurrectionist. His singular focus from beginning to end is on reclaiming his wife from her slave master. Presumably, we are to understand this solipsism as indicative of the depth and intensity of his love, probably also as homage to the borderline sociopathic style of the spaghetti western/blaxploitation hero. Regardless, Django’s quest is entirely individualist; he never intends to challenge slavery and never does. Indeed, for the purpose of buttressing the credibility of their ruse, he even countermands his bounty hunter partner’s attempt to save—through purchase, of course—a recalcitrant “Mandingo fighter” from being ripped apart by dogs. He is essentially indifferent to the handful of slaves who are freed as incidental byproducts of his actions. The happy ending is that he and Broomhilda ride off together and free in a slavocracy that is not a whit less secure at the moment of celebratory resolution than it was when Django set out on his mission of retrieval and revenge. In both films the bogus happy endings are possible only because they characterize their respective regimes of racial hierarchy in the superficial terms of interpersonal transactions. In The Help segregationism’s evil was small-minded bigotry and lack of sensitivity; it was more like bad manners than oppression. In Tarantino’s vision**,** slavery’s definitive injustice was **its** gratuitous and sadistic brutalization and sexualized degradation. Malevolent, ludicrously arrogant whites owned slaves most **conspicuously** to degrade and torture them**.** Apart from serving a formal dinner in a plantation house—and Tarantino, the Chance the Gardener of American filmmakers (and Best Original Screenplay? Really?) seems to draw his images of plantation life from Birth of a Nation and Gone With the Wind, as well as old Warner Brothers cartoons—and the Mandingo fighters and comfort girls, **Tarantino’s slaves do no actual work at all; they’re present only to be brutalized**. In fact, **the cavalier** sadism **with which owners and traders treat them** belies the fact **that** slaves were**, first and foremost,** capital investments**. It’s not for nothing that New Orleans has a monument to the** estimated 20,000-**30,000 antebellum Irish immigrants who died constructing the New Basin Canal; slave labor was too valuable for such lethal work.** The Help trivializes Jim Crow by reducing it to its most superficial features and irrational extremes. The master-servant nexus was**, and is,** a labor relation**.** And **the problem of labor** **relations particular to the segregationist regime wasn’t employers’** bigoted **lack of respect** or failure to hear the voices of the domestic servants, **or** even benighted **refusal to recognize their** equal **humanity. It was that** the labor relation was structured within and sustained by a politicaland institutional order that **severely** impinged on, when it didn’t altogether deny, black citizens’ avenues for pursuit of grievances and standing before the law. **The crucial lynchpin** **of that order** was neither myopia nor malevolence; it was suppression of black citizens’ capacities for direct participation in civic and political life, with racial disfranchisement and the constant threat of terror intrinsic to substantive denial of equal protection and due process before the law as its principal mechanisms. And the point of the regime **wasn’t** racial hatred **or enforced disregard; its** roots lay in the much more prosaic concern of **dominant elites** to maintain their political and economic hegemony by suppressing potential opposition and in the linked ideal of maintaining access to a labor force with no options but to accept employment on whatever terms employers offered. (Those who liked The Help or found it moving should watch The Long Walk Home, a 1990 film set in Montgomery, Alabama, around the bus boycott. I suspect that’s the film you thought you were watching when you saw The Help.) Django Unchained trivializes slavery by reducing it to its most barbaric and lurid excesses. **Slavery** also **was fundamentally a labor relation. It was a form of forced labor regulated—systematized, enforced and sustained—through a political and institutional order that specified it as a civil relationship granting owners** absolute **control over** the life, liberty, and fortunes of others defined as eligible for enslavement, including most of all control of the conditions of their **labor** **and** appropriation of its **product.** Historian Kenneth M. Stampp quotes a slaveholder’s succinct explanation: “‘For what purpose does the master hold the servant?’ asked an ante-bellum Southerner. ‘Is it not that by his labor, he, the master, may accumulate wealth?’”1 That absolute **control permitted** horrible, **unthinkable brutality**, to be sure, **but** perpetrating such **brutality was neither the point** of slavery **nor its essential injustice. The master-slave relationship could, and did, exist without brutality, and certainly without sadism** and sexual degradation. In Tarantino’s depiction, however, it is not clear that slavery shorn of its extremes of brutality would be objectionable. **It does not diminish the** historical injustice and **horror of slavery to note that it** **was not the product of** sui generis, **transcendent Evil but a terminus on a continuum of bound labor that was more norm than exception in the Anglo-American world until well into the eighteenth century**, if not later. As legal historian Robert **Steinfeld points out, it is not so much** **slavery, but the emergence of the notion of free labor**—as **the absolute control of a worker over** **her person—that is the historical anomaly that needs to be explained**.2 **Django** Unchained **sanitizes the essential injustice** of slavery **by not problematizing it and by focusing instead on** the extremes of **brutality** and degradation it permitted, to the extent of making some of them up, just as does The Help regarding Jim Crow. The Help could not imagine a more honest and complex view of segregationist Mississippi partly because it uses the period ultimately as a prop for human interest cliché, and Django Unchained’s absurdly ahistorical view of plantation slavery is only backdrop for the merger of spaghetti western and blaxploitation hero movie. Neither film is really about the period in which it is set. Film critic Manohla Dargis, reflecting a decade ago on what she saw as a growing Hollywood penchant for period films, observed that such films are typically “stripped of politics and historical fact…and instead will find meaning in appealing to seemingly timeless ideals and stirring scenes of love, valor and compassion” and that “the Hollywood professionals who embrace accuracy most enthusiastically nowadays are costume designers.”3 That observation applies to both these films, although in Django concern with historically accurate representation of material culture applies only to the costumes and props of the 1970s film genres Tarantino wants to recall. To make sense of how Django Unchained has received so much warmer a reception among black and leftoid commentators than did The Help, it is useful to recall Margaret **Thatcher’s** 1981 dictum that “economics are the method: the object is to change the soul.”4 Simply put, she and her element have **won. Few observers**—among opponents and boosters alike—**have noted how** deeply and **thoroughly both films are embedded in the practical ontology of neoliberalism, the complex of unarticulated assumptions and unexamined first premises that provide its common sense**, its lifeworld. Objection to The Help has been largely of the shooting fish in a barrel variety: complaints about the film’s paternalistic treatment of the maids, which generally have boiled down to an objection that the master-servant relation is thematized at all, as well as the standard, predictable litany of anti-racist charges about whites speaking for blacks, the film’s inattentiveness to the fact that at that time in Mississippi black people were busily engaged in liberating themselves, etc. An illustration of this tendency that conveniently refers to several other variants of it is Akiba Solomon, “Why I’m Just Saying No to ‘The Help’ and Its Historical Whitewash” in Color Lines, August 10, 2011, available at: http://colorlines.com/archives/2011/08/why\_im\_just\_saying\_no\_to\_the\_help.html. **Defenses** of Django Unchained **pivot on claims about** the social significance of the narrative of a black hero. One node of this argument emphasizes **the need to validate a history of autonomous black agency and “resistance”** as a politico-existential desideratum. **It** accommodates a view that **stresses the importance of recognition of rebellious or militant individuals** and revolts in black American history. Another centers on a notion that exposure to fictional black heroes can inculcate the sense of personal efficacy necessary **to overcome** the psychological effects of **inequality** and to facilitate upward mobility and may undermine some whites’ negative stereotypes about black people. In either register assignment of **social** or political **importance** to depictions of black heroes **rests on presumptions about the nexus of mass cultural representation, social commentary, and racial justice** that are more significant politically than the controversy about the film itself. In both versions, **this** argument **casts political and economic problems in psychological terms.** Injustice appears as a matter of disrespect and denial of due recognition, and the remedies proposed—which are all about images projected and the distribution of jobs associated with their projection—look a lot like self-esteem engineering. Moreover, nothing could indicate more strikingly the extent of neoliberal **ideological** hegemony than the idea **that** the mass culture industry and its representational practices constitute a meaningful terrain for struggle to advance egalitarian interests**.** It is possible to entertain that view seriously only by **ignoring the fact that the** production and consumption of mass culture is **thoroughly** embedded in capitalist material and ideological imperatives**.** That, incidentally, is why I prefer the usage “mass culture” to describe this industry and its products and processes, although I recognize that it may seem archaic to some readers. The mass culture v. popular culture debate dates at least from the 1950s and has continued with occasional crescendos ever since.5 For two decades or more, instructively in line with the retreat of possibilities for concerted left political action outside the academy, the popular culture side of that debate has been dominant, along with its view that the products of this precinct of mass consumption capitalism are somehow capable of transcending or subverting their material identity as commodities, if not avoiding that identity altogether. **Despite the** dogged **commitment of** several generations of American Studies and **cultural studies** graduate **students who want to** **valorize** watching television and immersion in hip-hop or other specialty market niches centered on youth recreation and the most ephemeral **fads as both intellectually avant-garde and politically “resistive,” it should be time to admit that that** earnest disposition **is** intellectually shallow and an **ersatz politics.** **The idea of** “popular” **culture posits a spurious autonomy** and organicism **that** actually **affirm mass industrial processes by effacing them, especially in the** putatively rebel, **fringe, or underground** market **niches that depend on the fiction of the authentic to announce the birth of new product cycles.** The power of the hero is a cathartic trope that connects mainly with the sensibility of adolescent boys—of whatever nominal age. Tarantino has allowed as much, responding to black critics’ complaints about the violence and copious use of “nigger” by proclaiming “Even for the film’s biggest detractors, I think their children will grow up and love this movie. I think it could become a rite of passage for young black males.”6 This response stems no doubt from Tarantino’s arrogance and opportunism, and some critics have denounced it as no better than racially presumptuous. But he is hardly alone in defending the film with an assertion that it gives black youth heroes, is generically inspirational or both. Similarly, in a January 9, 2012 interview on the Daily Show, George Lucas adduced this line to promote his even more execrable race-oriented live-action cartoon, Red Tails, which, incidentally, trivializes segregation in the military by reducing it to a matter of bad or outmoded attitudes. The ironic effect is significant understatement of both the obstacles the Tuskegee airmen faced and their actual accomplishments by rendering them as backdrop for a blackface, slapped-together remake of Top Gun. (Norman Jewison’s 1984 film, A Soldier’s Story, adapted from Charles Fuller’s A Soldier’s Play, is a much more sensitive and thought-provoking rumination on the complexities of race and racism in the Jim Crow U.S. Army—an army mobilized, as my father, a veteran of the Normandy invasion, never tired of remarking sardonically, to fight the racist Nazis.) Lucas characterized his film as “patriotic, even jingoistic” and was explicit that he wanted to create a film that would feature “real heroes” and would be “inspirational for teenage boys.” Much as Django Unchained’s defenders compare it on those terms favorably to Lincoln, Lucas hyped Red Tails as being a genuine hero story unlike “Glory, where you have a lot of white officers running those guys into cannon fodder.” Of course, the film industry is sharply tilted toward the youth market, as Lucas and Tarantino are acutely aware. But Lucas, unlike Tarantino, was not being defensive in asserting his desire to inspire the young; he offered it more as a boast. As he has said often, he’d wanted for years to make a film about the Tuskegee airmen, and he reports that he always intended telling their story as a feel-good, crossover inspirational tale. Telling it that way also fits in principle (though in this instance not in practice, as Red Tails bombed at the box office) with the commercial imperatives of increasingly degraded mass entertainment. Dargis observed that the ahistoricism of the recent period films is influenced by market imperatives in a global film industry. The more a film is tied to historically specific contexts, the more difficult it is to sell elsewhere. That logic selects for special effects-driven products as well as standardized, decontextualized and simplistic—“universal”—story lines, preferably set in fantasy worlds of the filmmakers’ design. As Dargis notes, these films find their meaning in shopworn clichés puffed up as timeless verities, including uplifting and inspirational messages for youth. But something else underlies the stress on inspiration in the black-interest films, which shows up in critical discussion of them as well. All these films—The Help, Red Tails, Django Unchained, even Lincoln and Glory—make a claim to public attention based partly on their social significance beyond entertainment or art, and they do so because they engage with significant moments in the history of the nexus of race and politics in the United States. There would not be so much discussion and debate and no Golden Globe, NAACP Image, or Academy Award nominations for The Help, Red Tails, or Django Unchained if those films weren’t defined partly by thematizing that nexus of race and politics in some way. **The pretensions to social significance that fit** these films **into their particular market niche don’t conflict with** the mass-market film industry’s imperative of **infantilization because those** **pretensions** are only part of the show; they **are little more than empty bromides, product differentiation** in the patter **of** “seemingly timeless **ideals” which** the mass entertainment **industry constantly recycles**. (Andrew O’Hehir observes as much about Django Unchained, which he describes as “a three-hour trailer for a movie that never happens.”7) That comes through in the defense of these films, in the face of evidence of their failings, that, after all, they are “just entertainment.” **Their substantive content is ideological**; **it is their contribution to the naturalization of neoliberalism’s ontology as they propagandize its universalization across spatial, temporal, and social contexts.** Purportedly in the interest of popular education cum entertainment, Django Unchained and The Help, and Red Tails for that matter, read the sensibilities of the present into the past by divesting the latter of its specific historicity. They reinforce the sense of the past as generic old-timey times distinguishable from the present by superficial inadequacies—outmoded fashion, technology, commodities and ideas—since overcome. In The Help Hilly’s obsession with her pet project marks segregation’s petty apartheid as irrational in part because of the expense rigorously enforcing it would require; the breadwinning husbands express their frustration with it as financially impractical. Hilly is a mean-spirited, narrow-minded person whose rigid and tone-deaf commitment to segregationist consistency not only reflects her limitations of character but also is economically unsound, a fact that further defines her, and the cartoon version of Jim Crow she represents, as irrational. **The deeper message** of these films, insofar as they deny the integrity of the past, **is that there is no thinkable alternative to the ideological order under which we live. This** message is reproduced throughout the mass entertainment industry; it **shapes the normative reality even of** the **fantasy worlds that masquerade as escapism. Even** among those who laud the supposedly **cathartic effects of** Django’s **insurgent violence** as reflecting a greater truth of abolition than passage of the Thirteenth Amendment, few commentators notice that he and Broomhilda attained their freedom through a market transaction.8 This **reflects an ideological hegemony in which students** all too commonly **wonder why planters would deny slaves or sharecroppers education because education would have made them more productive as workers.** And, tellingly, in a glowing rumination in the Daily Kos, Ryan Brooke inadvertently thrusts mass culture’s destruction of historicity into bold relief by declaiming on “the segregated society presented” in Django Unchained and babbling on—with the absurdly ill-informed and pontifical self-righteousness that the blogosphere enables—about our need to take “responsibility for preserving racial divides” if we are “to put segregation in the past and fully fulfill Dr. King’s dream.”9 It’s all an indistinguishable mush of bad stuff about racial injustice in the old-timey days. **Decoupled from** its moorings in **a historically specific political economy, slavery becomes at bottom a problem of race relations, and**, as historian Michael R. West argues forcefully, “race relations” **emerged as and** has remained a discourse that substitutes **etiquette for equality.**10 This is the context in which we should take account of what “inspiring the young” means as a justification for those films. In part, **the claim to inspire is a simple platitude, more filler than substance. It is**, as I’ve already noted, both an excuse for films that are cartoons made for an infantilized, generic market and an assertion of a claim to a particular niche within that market. More insidiously, though, the ease with which “inspiration of youth” rolls out in this context resonates with three related and disturbing themes: 1) underclass ideology’s narratives—now all Americans’ common sense—that link poverty and inequality most crucially to (racialized) cultural inadequacy and psychological damage; 2) the belief that racial inequality stems from prejudice, bad ideas and ignorance, and 3) the cognate of both: theneoliberal rendering of social justice as equality of opportunity, with an aspiration of creating **“**competitive **individual** minority agents who **might** stand a better fighting chance in the neoliberal **rat** race rather than a **positive alternative vision** of a society that eliminates the need to fight **constantly** against disruptive market whims in the first place.”11 This politics seeps through in the chatter about Django Unchained in particular. Erin Aubry Kaplan, in the Los Angeles Times article in which Tarantino asserts his appeal to youth, remarks that the “most disturbing detail [about slavery] is the emotional violence and degradation directed at blacks that effectively keeps them at the bottom of the social order, a place they still occupy today.” Writing on the Institute of the Black World blog, one Dr. Kwa David Whitaker, a 1960s-style cultural nationalist, declaims on Django’s testament to the sources of degradation and “unending servitude [that] has rendered [black Americans] almost incapable of making sound evaluations of our current situations or the kind of steps we must take to improve our condition.”12 **In its blindness to political economy,** thisnotion of black cultural **or psychological damage** as **either** a legacy of slavery **or of more indirect recent origin—e.g., urban migration, crack epidemic**, matriarchy, babies making babies—comports **well** with the reduction of slavery and Jim Crow to interpersonal dynamics and bad attitudes. It substitutes a “**politics of recognition**” anda patter of **racial uplift for politics and** underwrites **a conflation** **of** political action and therapy**.** With respect to the nexus of race and inequality, **this discourse supports victim-blaming programs of personal rehabilitation and self-esteem engineering**—inspiration—as easily as it does multiculturalist respect for difference, which, by the way, also feeds back to self-esteem engineering and inspiration as nodes within a larger political economy of race relations. Either way, this is a discourse that displaces **a politics** challenging social structures **that reproduce inequality** with concern for the feelings and characteristics of individuals and of categories of population statistics reified as singular groups that are equivalent to individuals. This discourse has made it possible (again, but more sanctimoniously this time) to characterize destruction of low-income housing as an uplift strategy for poor people; curtailment of access to public education as “choice”; being cut adrift from essential social wage protections as “empowerment”; and individual material success as socially important role modeling. **Neoliberalism’s triumph is affirmed** **with** unselfconscious clarity in the ostensibly **leftist defenses** of Django Unchained that center on the theme of slaves’ having liberated themselves. **Trotskyists, would-be anarchists, and** psychobabbling **identitarians have their respective sectarian garnishes**: Trotskyists see everywhere the bugbear of “bureaucratism” and mystify “self-activity;” **anarchists** similarly fetishize direct action and voluntarism and **oppose large-scale public institutions on principle, and identitarians romanticize essentialist notions of organic**, folkish **authenticity under constant threat from institutions.** However, **all are indistinguishable from the nominally libertarian right in their disdain for government and institutionally based political action, which their common reflex is to disparage as inauthentic or corrupt.**

#### Class is a key starting point—not to obscure intersecting inequalities, but to historicize them and address the engines of mass economic impoverishment. Taylor ‘11

Taylor 11 [Keeanga-Yamahtta Taylor, on the editorial board of the International Socialist Review and a doctoral student in African American Studies at Northwestern University; “Race, class and Marxism,” SocialistWorker.org, http://socialistworker.org/2011/01/04/race-class-and-marxism]

Marxists believe that the potential for that kind of unity is dependant on battles and struggles against racism today. Without a commitment by revolutionary organizations in the here and now to the fight against racism, working-class unity will never be achieved and the revolutionary potential of the working class will never be realized. Yet despite all the evidence of this commitment to fighting racism over many decades, **Marxism has been maligned as, at best, "blind" to combating racism** **and**, at worst, **"incapable" of it. For example**, in an article published last summer, popular commentator and self-described "**anti-racist" Tim Wise summarized the critique of "left activists" that he later defines as Marxists.** He writes: [L]eft activists often marginalize people of color by operating from a framework of extreme class reductionism, which holds that the "real" issue is class, not race, that "the only color that matters is green," and that issues like racism are mere "identity politics," which should take a backseat to promoting class-based universalism and programs to help working people. This reductionism, by ignoring the way that even middle class and affluent people of color face racism and color-based discrimination (and by presuming that low-income folks of color and low-income whites are equally oppressed, despite a wealth of evidence to the contrary) reinforces white denial, privileges white perspectivism and dismisses the lived reality of people of color. Even more, as we'll see, it ignores perhaps the most important political lesson regarding the interplay of race and class: namely, that the biggest reason why there is so little working-class consciousness and unity in the Untied States (and thus, why class-based programs to uplift all in need are so much weaker here than in the rest of the industrialized world), is precisely because of racism and the way that white racism has been deliberately inculcated among white working folks. Only by confronting that directly (rather than sidestepping it as class reductionists seek to do) can we ever hope to build cross-racial, class based coalitions. In other words, for the policies favored by the class reductionist to work--be they social democrats or Marxists--or even to come into being, racism and white supremacy must be challenged directly. Here, **Wise accuses Marxism of: "extreme class reductionism," meaning that Marxists allegedly think that class is more important than race; reducing struggles against racism to "mere identity politics"; and requiring that struggles against racism should "take a back seat" to struggles over economic issues.** **Wise also accuses** so-called "left activists" **of** reinforcing **"white denial" and "dismiss[ing] the** lived **reality of people of color"--which, of course, presumes Left activists and Marxists to all be white**. - - - - - - - - - - - - - - - **What do Marxists actually say? Marxists argue that** capitalism is a system that is based on **the** exploitation **of the many by the few.** **Because it is a system based on gross inequality,** it requires various tools to divide the majority--racism and all oppressions under capitalism serve this purpose. Moreover, oppression is used to justify and "explain" unequal relationships in society that enrich the minority that live off the majority's labor. **Thus,** racism developed **initially** to explain and justify the enslavement of Africans--because they were less than human and undeserving of liberty and freedom. Everyone accepts the idea that **the oppression of slaves was rooted in the class relations of exploitation under that system**. Fewer recognize that **under capitalism,** wage slavery is the pivot around which all other inequalities and oppressions turn. Capitalism used racism to justify plunder, conquest and slavery, but as Karl Marx pointed out, it also used racism to divide and rule--to pit one section of the working class against another and thereby blunt class consciousness. **To claim**, as Marxists do, **that racism is a product of capitalism is not to deny** or diminish **its importance** or impact in American society. **It is simply to explain its origins and the reasons for its perpetuation**. Many on the left today talk about class as if it is one of many oppressions, often describing it as "classism." What people are really referring to as "classism" is elitism or snobbery, and not the fundamental organization of society under capitalism. Moreover, **it is popular today to talk about various oppressions, including class, as intersecting.** While it is true that oppressions can reinforce and compound each other, they are born out of the material relations shaped by capitalism **and the economic exploitation that is at the heart of capitalist society**. In other words, it is the material and economic structure of society that gave rise to a range of ideas and ideologies to justify, explain and help perpetuate that order. In the United States, racism is the most important of those ideologies. Despite the widespread beliefs to the contrary of his critics, Karl **Marx** himself **was well aware of the centrality of race under capitalism**. While Marx did not write extensively on the question of slavery and its racial impact in societies specifically, he **did write** **about** the way in which European capitalism emerged because of its pilfering, rape and destruction, famously writing: The **discovery of gold and silver in America,** the extirpation, enslavement and **entombment** in mines **of the aboriginal population,** the beginning of the conquest and **looting of the East Indies**, the **turning** of **Africa into a warren for** the **commercial hunting** of Black skins, **signalized the** rosy dawn of the **era of capitalist production**. He also recognized the extent to which slavery was central to the world economy. He wrote: Direct slavery is just as much the pivot of bourgeois industry as machinery, credits, etc. Without slavery you have no cotton; without cotton you have no modern industry. It is slavery that has given the colonies their value; it is the colonies that have created world trade, and it is world trade that is the pre-condition of large-scale industry. Thus slavery is an economic category of the greatest importance. Without slavery North America, the most progressive of countries, would be transformed into a patriarchal country. Wipe out North America from the map of the world, and you will have anarchy--the complete decay of modern commerce and civilization. Cause slavery to disappear and you will have wiped America off the map of nations. Thus slavery, because it is an economic category, has always existed among the institutions of the peoples. Modern nations have been able only to disguise slavery in their own countries, but they have imposed it without disguise upon the New World. Thus, there is a fundamental understanding of the centrality of slave labor in the national and international economy. But what about race? Despite the dearth of Marx's own writing on race in particular, one might look at Marx's correspondence and deliberations on the American Civil War to draw conclusions as to whether Marx was as dogmatically focused on purely economic issues as his critics make him out be. One must raise the question: If Marx was reductionist, how is his unabashed support and involvement in abolitionist struggles in England explained? **If Marx was truly an economic reductionist, he might have surmised that slavery and capitalism were incompatible, and simply waited for slavery to whither away**. W.E.B. Du Bois in his Marxist tome Black Reconstruction, quotes at length a letter penned by Marx as the head of the International Workingmen's Association, written to Abraham Lincoln in 1864 in the midst of the Civil War: The contest for the territories which opened the epoch, was it not to decide whether the virgin soil of immense tracts should be wedded to the labor of the immigrant or be prostituted by the tramp of the slaver driver? When an oligarchy of 300,000 slave holders dared to inscribe for the first time in the annals of the world "Slavery" on the banner of armed revolt, when on the very spots where hardly a century ago the idea of one great Democratic Republic had first sprung up, whence the first declaration of the rights of man was issued...when on the very spots counter-revolution...maintained "slavery to be a beneficial institution"...and cynically proclaimed property in man 'the cornerstone of the new edifice'...then the working classes of Europe understood at once...that the slaveholders' rebellion was to sound the tocsin for a general holy war of property against labor... They consider it an earnest sign of the epoch to come that it fell to the lot of Abraham Lincoln, the single-minded son of the working class, to lead his country through the matchless struggles for the rescue of the enchained race and the Reconstruction of a social order. **Not only was Marx personally opposed to slavery and actively organized against it, but he theorized that slavery and the resultant race discrimination** that flowed from it **were not just problems for the slaves** themselves, but for white workers who were constantly under the threat of losing work to slave labor. This did not mean white workers were necessarily sympathetic to the cause of the slaves--most of them were not. But Marx was not addressing the issue of consciousness, but objective factors when he wrote in Capital, "In the United States of America, every independent movement of the workers was paralyzed as long as slavery disfigured a part of the Republic. Labor cannot emancipate itself in the white skin where in the Black it is branded." Moreover, Marx understood the dynamics of racism in a modern sense as well--as a means by which workers who had common, objective interests with each other could also become mortal enemies because of subjective, but nevertheless real, racist and nationalist ideas. Looking at the tensions between Irish and English workers, with a nod toward the American situation between Black and white workers, Marx wrote: Every industrial and commercial center in England possesses a working class divided into two hostile camps, English proletarians and Irish proletarians. The ordinary English worker hates the Irish worker as a competitor who lowers his standard of life. In relation to the Irish worker he feels himself a member of the ruling nation and so turns himself into a tool of the aristocrats and capitalists of his country against Ireland, thus strengthening their domination over himself. He cherishes religious, social and national prejudices against the Irish worker. His attitude is much the same as that of the "poor whites" to the "niggers" in the former slave states of the USA. The Irishman pays him back with interest in his own money. He sees in the English worker at once the accomplice and stupid tool of the English rule in Ireland. This antagonism is artificially kept alive and intensified by the press, the pulpit, the comic papers, in short by all the means at the disposal of the ruling classes. This antagonism is the secret of the impotence of the English working class, despite its organization. It is the secret by which the capitalist maintains its power. And that class is fully aware of it. Out of this quote, one can see a Marxist theory of how racism operated in contemporary society, after slavery was ended. Marx was highlighting three things: first, that capitalism promotes economic competition between workers; second, that the ruling class uses racist ideology to divide workers against each other; and finally, that **when one group of workers suffer oppression, it negatively impacts the entire class**.

freedom and necessity, between the individual and the species" (84).

#### Their fixation on anti-blackness suppresses class inquiry. Hill ‘09

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One of two major tenets of CRT that Cole (2008a, b, 2009; see also Cole and Maisuria (2007, 2009)) critically examine is **CRT’s “idea that the concept of white supremacy better expresses oppression** in contemporary societies based on ‘race’ **than does the concept of racism**.” Cole and Maisuria (and Cole) argue that Critical Race Theory “homogenises **all** white people together in positions of class power and privilege**,** which, of course, is factually incorrect**, both with respect to social class inequality in general, and, as will be shown in later in this paper, with reference to xenoracialization.”** Cole and Maisuria (2007) continue, “**it is certainly not white people as a whole who are in this hegemonic position**, nor white people as a whole who benefit from current education policy, or any other legislation. Indeed **the white working class, as part of the working class in general, consistently fares badly in the education system**.” Cole (2008a) notes that, **in focusing on issues of color and being divorced from matters related to capitalist requirements with respect to the labour market,** CRT is ill-equipped to analyse the discourse of xenoracism and processes of xenoracialization. **McGary** (1999:91) **points out** that “**Black people have been used in ways that white people have not.” Young’s** (2001) **comment** (with which I and Cole and Maisuria would concur) **is that McGary’s “observation may be true, but it does not mean that whites have not also been ‘used**.’” Young continues, “yes, whites **may be** ‘used’ **differently, but they are still ‘used’ because that is the logic of exploitative regimes** – people are ‘used,’ that is to say, their labor is commodified and exchanged for profit.” Young continues, in his critique of McGary, that such a view disconnects black alienation from other social relations; **hence,** it **ultimately** reifies race, and**,** in doing so**,** suppresses materialist inquiries into the class logic of race. That is to say, the meaning of race is **not** to be found within **its own internal dynamics but rather in dialectical relation to and as an ideological justification of** the exploitative wage-labor economy. Critical Race Theory, and other similar theories of “race” salience, such as (Molefi Kete Asante, and of Paul Gilroy (2001), critiqued in Young, 2006) are understandable, as Leonardo (2004) notes, in the USA, as a salient subjective lens and understanding/analysis of felt (and indeed, of course, actual and widespread) oppression. As Leonardo (2004), Young (2006), Cole and Maisuria (2007), and Cole (2008b) note, Critical Race Theory**, just as earlier theories such as that of Fanon and Negritude, do draw into the limelight**, do expose and represent **black experience,** humilation, oppression, racism. **But they** collude, just as much as race equivalence theorists such as Michael W. Apple, in **super-elevating subjective consciousness of** one aspect of identity and thereby exclude the (“raced” and gendered) classessential nature of **capitalism and the** labour-capital relation. **As such it seeks social democratic reformism,** the winning of equal rights and opportunities **– within a capitalist** (albeit reformed) **economy** and society. **As Young** (2006) **puts it, unlike many** commentators who engage race matters**, I do not isolate these social sites and view race as a local problem, which would lead to reformist measures** along the lines of either legal reform or a cultural-ideological battle to win the hearts and minds of people **and thus keep the existing socioeconomic arrangements intact** . . . **the eradication of race oppression also requires a totalizing political project: the transformation of existing capitalism – a system which produces difference** (the racial/gender division of labor) **and accompanying ideological narratives that justify the resulting social inequality.** Hence, my project articulates a transformative theory of race – a theory that reclaims revolutionary class politics in the interests of contributing toward a post-racist society. Critical **Race Theory seems analytically flawed**, **to be based on the category error of assigning “race” as the primary form of oppression in capitalist society, and to be substantially situationally specific to the USA**, **with its horrific experience and legacy of slavery**. **It also seems to me to be a form of left radical United States imperialist hegemonizing,** that is, **of USA-based academics projecting on to other countries those experiences and analyses and policy perspectives that derive most specifically from the USA experience of slavery and its contemporary effects**. I am very much aware of the existence and horrors of racism in, for example, Britain and Europe in general.18 Notwithstanding those horrors, the Critical Race Theory analysis would appear to have less significance and applicability in, for example, Western and Eastern Europe, or, for example, India, Pakistan, and Nepal, than in the USA.

### Link: Discourse First

#### A focus on discourse is an abandonment of real change – we must use a materialist focus to solve oppression. Cloud ‘01

(Dana L. Cloud, Associate Professor, Communication Studies UT Austin, “The Affirmative Masquerade,” American Communication Journal, Volume 4, Issue 3, Spring 01, <http://www.acjournal.org/holdings/vol4/iss3/special/cloud.htm>)

At the very least, however, it is clear that **poststructuralist discourse theories have left behind some of historical materialism’s most valuable conceptual tools for** any **theoretical and critical practice that aims at informing practical, oppositional political activity on behalf of** historically exploited and **oppressed groups**. As Nancy Hartsock (1983, 1999) and many others have argued (see Ebert 1996; Stabile, 1997; Triece, 2000; Wood, 1999), **we need to retain concepts such as standpoint epistemology** (wherein truth standards are not absolute or universal but arise from the scholar’s alignment with the perspectives of particular classes and groups) **and fundamental, class-based interests** (as opposed to understanding class as just another discursively-produced identity). **We need extra-discursive reality checks on ideological mystification and economic contextualization of discursive phenomena**. Most importantly, **critical scholars bear the obligation to explain the origins and causes of exploitation and oppression in order** better **to inform the fight against them**.  In poststructuralist discourse theory, **the "retreat from class"** (Wood, 1999) **expresses an unwarranted pessimism about what can be accomplished in late capitalism with regard to** understanding and **transforming** system and **structure at the level of the economy and the state. It substitutes** meager **cultural freedoms for macro-level social transformation** even **as millions of people around the world feel the global reach of capitalism more deeply than ever before**. At the core of the issue is a debate across the humanities and social sciences with regard to whether we live in a "new economy," an allegedly postmodern, information-driven historical moment in which, it is argued, organized mass movements are no longer effective in making material demands of system and structure (Melucci, 1996). In suggesting that global capitalism has so innovated its strategies that there is no alternative to its discipline, arguments proclaiming "a new economy" risk inaccuracy, pessimism, and conservatism (see Cloud, in press). While a thoroughgoing summary is beyond the scope of this essay, there is a great deal of evidence against claims that capitalism has entered a new phase of extraordinary innovation, reach, and scope (see Hirst and Thompson, 1999).  Furthermore, both class polarization (see Mishel, Bernstein, and Schmitt, 2001) and the ideological and management strategies that contain class antagonism (see Cloud, 1998; Parker and Slaughter, 1994) still resemble their pre-postmodern counterparts. A recent report of the Economic Policy Institute concludes that in the 1990s, inequality between rich and poor in the U.S. (as well as around the world) continued to grow, in a context of rising worker productivity, a longer work week for most ordinary Americans, and continued high poverty rates.  Even as the real wage of the median CEO rose nearly 63 percent from 1989, to 1999, more than one in four U.S. workers lives at or below the poverty level. Among these workers, women are disproportionately represented, as are Black and Latino workers. (Notably, unionized workers earn nearly thirty percent more, on average, than non-unionized workers.) Meanwhile, Disney workers sewing t-shirts and other merchandise in Haiti earn 28 cents an hour. Disney CEO Michael Eisner made nearly six hundred million dollars in 1999--451,000 times the wage of the workers under his employ (Roesch, 1999). According to United Nations and World Bank sources, several trans-national corporations have assets larger than several countries combined. Sub-Saharan Africa and the Russian Federation have seen sharp economic decline, while assets of the world’s top three billionaires exceed the GNP of all of the least-developed countries and their combined population of 600 million people (Shawki and D’Amato, 2000, pp. 7-8).  **In this context of a real** (and clearly bipolar) **class divide in** late **capitalist society, the postmodern party is a masquerade ball, in which theories claiming to offer ways toward emancipation** and progressive critical practice in fact **encourage scholars** and/as activists **to abandon** any **commitment to crafting oppositional political blocs** with instrumental and perhaps revolutionary potential. Instead, on their arguments, we must recognize agency as an illusion of humanism and settle for playing with our identities in a mood of irony, excess, and profound skepticism. Marx and Engels’ critique of the Young Hegelians applies equally well to the postmodern discursive turn: "They are only fighting against ‘phrases.’ They forget, however, that to these phrases they themselves are only opposing other phrases, and that they are in no way combating the real existing world when they are merely combating the phrases of this world" (1976/1932, p. 41).  Of course, the study of "phrases" is important to the project of materialist critique in the field of rhetoric. The point, though, is to explain the connections between phrases on the one hand and economic interests and systems of oppression and exploitation on the other. Marxist ideology critique, understands that classes, motivated by class interest, produce rhetorics wittingly and unwittingly, successfully and unsuccessfully.  Those rhetorics are strategically adapted to context and audience. Yet **Marxist theory is not naïve in** its **understanding** of intention or individual **agency.** Challenging individualist humanism, **Marxist** ideology **critics regard people as "products of circumstances**" (and changed people as products of changed circumstances; Marx, 1972b/1888, p. 144).  Within this understanding, **Marxist** ideology **critics can describe and evaluate cultural discourses** such as that of racism or sexism **as strategic and complex expressions of both their moment in history and of their class basis.** Further, this mode of critique seeks to explain both why and how social reality is fundamentally, systematically oppressive and exploitative, exploring not only the surface of discourses but also their often-complex and multi-vocal motivations and consequences. As Burke (1969/1950) notes, **Marxism is both a method of rhetorical criticism and a rhetorical formation** itself (pp. 109-110). There is no pretense of neutrality or assumption of transcendent position for the critic.  Teresa Ebert (1996) summarizes the purpose of materialist ideology critique:      Materialist critique is a mode of knowing that inquires into what is not said, into the silences and the suppressed or missing, in order to uncover the concealed operations of power and the socio-economic relations connecting the myriad details and representations of our lives. It shows that apparently disconnected zones of culture are in fact materially linked through the highly differentiated, mediated, and dispersed operation of a systematic logic of exploitation. In sum, **materialist critique disrupts ‘what is’ to explain how social differences--**specifically gender, race, sexuality, and class--**have been systematically produced and continue to operate within regimes of exploitation, so that we can change them. It is the means for producing transformative knowledges.** (p. 7)

#### Language focus abdicates and denies the responsibility for constructive social change. McNally ’06

McNally ’6  (David, Teaches Pol. Sci. – York U., in “In Defense of History: Marxism and the Postmodern Agenda”, Ed. Ellen Wood and John Foster, p. 26-27)

There is a political theory here too. **Oppression is said to be rooted ultimately in the way in which we and others are defined linguistically**, the way in which we are positioned by words in relation to other words, or by codes which are said to be "structured like a language." **Our very being, our identities and "subjectivities**," **are constituted through language**. As one trendy literary theorist puts it in David Lodge's novel Nice Work, it is not merely that you are what you speak; no, according to the new idealism, "you are what speaks you." Language is thus the final "prison-house." Our confinement there is beyond resistance; it is impossible to escape from that which makes us what we are. **This new idealism corresponds to a profound collapse of political horizons.** **It is the pseudoradicalism of a period of retreat for the left**, **a verbal radicalism of the word without deed,** or, rather, of the word as deed. **In response to actual structures and practices of oppression and exploitation, it offers the rhetorical gesture, the ironic turn of phrase**. It comes as little surprise, then, when one of the chief philosophers of the new idealism, Jacques Derrida, tells us that he "would hesitate to use such terms as `liberation.' " I **Imprisoned within language, we may play with words; but we can never hope to liberate ourselves** from immutable structures of oppression rooted in language itself. **The new idealism and the politics it entails are not simply harmless curiosities; they are an abdication of political responsibility, especially at a time of ferocious capitalist restructuring, of widening gaps between rich and poor, of ruling class offensives against social programs. They are also an obstacle to the rebuilding of mass movements of protest and resistance**. It is not the purpose of this article, however, to conduct another critique of linguistic idealism whether it goes by the name of poststructuralism, postmodernism, or post-Marxism. Instead, I want to shift to a different terrain of debate by showing that Marxism can do more than attack the idealist nature of these intellectual currents. I want to demonstrate that **Marxism has the resources for an account of language and its position within the constellation of human practice that is richer and more profound than these idealist views**, and that this **account can understand language as**, among other things, **one site of social interaction** **which is decisively shaped by** relations of work and conflict, i.e., as shaped by **class struggle**.

#### Their argument amounts to discursive determinism. The politics of language should begin with its material roots. McNally ‘06

McNally ’6  (David, Teaches Pol. Sci. – York U., in “In Defense of History: Marxism and the Postmodern Agenda”, Ed. Ellen Wood and John Foster, p. 26-27)

Among the most important of these efforts is the pioneering work of V.N. Voloshinov, Marxism and the Philosophy of Language (1929). Voloshinov's work was developed during a period of vigorous debate about literature, art, language, and culture in the aftermath of the October Revolution of 1917. That debate was shut down as Stalin consolidated his dictatorship. Voloshinov himself disappeared during the purges of the 1930s. In recent years, however, the writings of Voloshinov and Mikhail Bakhtin, the intellectual figure who most influenced his work, have enjoyed something of a renaissance.3 **Three initial propositions are fundamental to Voloshinov's views on language. First, all signs**—from words to traffic signals—**are material, they are embodied in some physical form or other**. **Second, signs are social in nature;** they exist on the boundaries between individuals and **have no meaning outside of communicative interaction**. **Third, because signs are social, any comprehensive approach to language must focus on speech**, on that medium through which most` linguistic interaction occurs. Outside of speech, language is lifeless, it is a collection of means of communicating without the act of communication itself, a form without substance. The life of language, its very dynamism, thus resides in speech, in verbal interaction among people. But social interaction is not simply discursive. Speech is not a realm with an "independent existence"; it is one aspect of a multifaceted nexus of social relations. It follows that **signs are immersed in the relations that prevail among human beings**. In particular, relations of hierarchy among individuals have a tremendous influence on language and speech. "The forms of signs," Voloshinov writes, "are conditioned above all by the social organization of the participants involved" (p. 21). Speech is thus conditioned by hierarchy and domination—and by resistance to these. Different groups attempt to accent words in ways that express their experience of social interaction and their social aspirations. This applies especially, but by no means exclusively, to people in distinct class relationships. As a result, "sign becomes an arena of the class struggle" (p. 23). It should be emphasized that **this argument differs substantially from poststructuralist accounts** that may in some respects look similar. Michel **Foucault, for example, is noted for his view of language as a terrain of power and domination** embodied in particular social institutions such as hospitals, asylums and prisons; and, especially in some of his later writings, Foucault appears to allow for the possibility of resistance to practices of domination. Foucault's emphasis on power was an attempt to counter the political emptiness of theories that reduce social relations to their linguistic forms. In a vigorous riposte to Derrida, he charged deconstruction with locating everything in texts "so as not to put discursive practices back into the field of transformations in which they are carried out." 4 This position has considerable strengths. Yet, **while disavowing enclosure within texts, Foucault himself fails to break out of discourse as a field closed in upon itself**. Indeed, his whole concept of "power-knowledge" tends towards the position that power relations are constructed in and through practices of "knowing" humans. And these practices—of classifying, measuring, and surveying people—originate in the realm of discourse, where people are assigned to different categories of thought and description. It follows that "the development of humanity is a series of interpretations." **Thus, for all his insights into social institutions and their practices of domination, Foucault reverts to his own version of discursive determinism;** he is led by the logic of his position to conclude that inevitably "one remains within the dimension of discourse."5

### Link: Subjective Ethics

#### Centrally organized politics is essential. Decentered unity makes effective left politics impossible. Farahmandpur ‘04

Farahmandpur ‘4  (Ramin, Associate Prof. Ed. Leadership and Policy – Grad School Ed. – Portland State U., Journal for Critical Education Policy Studies, “ESSAY REVIEW: A Marxist Critique of Michael Apple’s Neo-Marxist Approach to Educational Reform [1]”, 2:1, March, http://www.jceps.com/index.php?pageID=article&articleID=24)

I find Apple’s notion of the ‘decentered unity’ highly problematic for a number of reasons. To begin with, **what holds the ‘decentered unity’ together**? In other words, what is the ideological bond that unites these diverse groups of differing social, political, and economic interests? Apple is quick to acknowledge this dilemma. He admits that there are “real differences” among the wide spectrum of social and political groups that include, for example, political, epistemological, and educational differences. If this is the case, then the follow-up question is: What are the ideological or political forces that conjoins these diverse groups? Responding to these criticisms, **Apple writes that the ‘decentered unity’ is “united in [its] opposition to the forces involved in the new conservative hegemonic alliance**” (p. 96). However, Apple’s reply does not sufficiently justify such a loosely knitted coalition.  For example, Apple derives the identity of the new social movements from their immediate experiences with oppression. **Yet,** in his polemic against E. P. Thompson, Perry Anderson (1980) reminds us that **experiences alone do not guarantee agency. In other words, there is no assurance that experiences arising from a particular form of oppression will generate progressive forms of social action, or motivate a class, for example, to organize itself and rise up against social injustices**. Anderson (1980) raises a number of other fundamental questions that are no less important. These include: How can we distinguish between a valid and invalid experience? And are religious experiences valid? [22]  In addition, **Apple’s neo-Marxist approach to educational reform can be classified as part of the ‘new pluralists’** movement on the Left that endorses ‘complexity theory’ and pluralistic notions of equality, freedom, and democracy (Meiksins Wood, 1995, 1998). Apple’s willing acceptance of the myriad forms of social oppression leads him to demote the centrality of the concept of class and class contradictions under capitalist social relations of production. [23] Content with his poststructuralist interpretation of the social relations of production, Apple unapologetically endorses an “unstructured and fragmented plurality of identities and differences” (Meiksins Wood, 1995).  Apple further notes that the New Right’s success is largely due to its ability to build a ‘decentered unity.’ Consequently, he recommends that the Left and progressive forces should learn from the victories of the New Right in their effort to build a progressive ‘decentered unity.’ On this point, Apple notes: “The right has been much more successful …than the left, in part because it has been able to craft—through hard and lengthy economic, political, and cultural efforts—a tense but still successful alliance that has shifted the major debates over education and economic and social policy onto its on terrain.”(p. 195). However, one of the underlying weaknesses in Apple’s strategy is that he juxtaposes the hegemonic and counter-hegemonic alliances among the forces of the Right and the Left. In Apple’s view, the Right and the Left are involved in a battle to persuade the masses to join their social and political cause. Hence, Apple leaves us with a political project that reduces social struggles to ideological battles between the Right and the Left that are largely fought in the terrain of discourse and language.  **Both Lenin (1918) and Trotsky (1917) recognized that hegemony was intimately linked to concrete “material processes” as well as to class relations and class antagonisms** (Joseph, 2002). Lenin (1918), for instance, stressed that proletariat hegemony can only be established by annexing political power or by securing state power. **For Lenin, the dictatorship of the proletariat was not merely a maneuver used to gain political power for its own sake**. Rather, **Lenin saw the dictatorship of the proletariat as a transitional period in which the working class develops class alliances with the peasants and the petit-bourgeoisie, and laboriously engages in a campaign to ‘win over the masses’ from the side of the bourgeoisie** (Joseph, in press).  **The key feature of democratic centralism is the vanguard party,** which makes a concerted effort to develop a dialectical relationship with the working class. [24] The purpose of the vanguard party, which is composed of the most advanced sectors of the working class, is to establish and strengthen the social hegemony of the working class by means of ‘democratic accountability’ (Joseph, 2002). [25] **The vanguard party provides the political direction of the working-class struggles**. [26] Finally, the success of working-class revolutionary movement does not merely depend on its political strength, but also on the existence of a crisis in bourgeois hegemony.  Regrettably, by failing to address any of the above issues, Apple’s (2001) approach is relegated to a form of ‘utopian idealism.’ As I stated earlier, Apple’s endorsement of counter-hegemonic alliances, which are primarily derived from the identities of the marginalized and disenfranchised groups in society, are forged on the basis of ideological interests rather than objective historical circumstances of the working class. As a result: “Instead of community and solidarity we get a plurality based on fractured identity and fragmented discourse” (Joseph, p. 93, 1998).  However, unlike democratic pluralism, the vanguard party does not constitute the sum of all the experiences of the marginalized and disenfranchised social groups. Instead, the vanguard party makes a concerted effort to “collectivize experience on a higher and [deeper] plane” (Joseph, 2002). **Neither individual nor collective experiences are sufficient for guiding proletarian struggles because experience alone cannot account for understanding how people relate to one another under capitalist social relations of production**. Along with individual and collective experiences, we **must examine the roots of social and historical circumstances from which experiences arise**.  Too often, as is the case with Apple’s (2001) neo-Marxist approach to educational reform, democratic centralism is dismissed an outdated totalitarianism and bureaucratic form of social organization that is largely attributed to the old-style, one-party rule of the former Soviet Union and its eastern European satellites. Contrary to Apple’s objection to democratic centralism, Lenin (1918) clearly understood the complexity and the structured nature of the social world. He recognized that social organizations are multi-faceted and heterogeneous and that the concept of class itself is not “uniform” or “homogenous.” This is why he stressed the importance of the political leadership and the organizational experience of the vanguard party. **Unlike democratic pluralism, wherein progressive forces are loosely tied to one another under an ideological umbrella, democratic centralism underscores the importance of establishing political power by developing class alliances**. Lenin’s (1918) initial concern, of course, was not to abolish classes outright, but to establish proletarian hegemony first by gaining control over the state power. It is worth quoting Joseph (2002) at length:  **Democratic centralism is today regarded as an outdated product of Russian political conditions, while in a postmodern vein**, **former Marxists oppose democratic centralism claiming that because today’s world is supposedly more complex a**nd heterogeneous, political organization must be founded on some sort of democratic pluralism. But **it could be countered that it is precisely because reality is complexly structured and diverse that organizational discipline is necessary if any meaningful social change is to occur**. **To argue for a loose pluralism as an alternative to centralization is to play the game on capitalism’s terms**. **In fact the ideology of postmodernism could be said to be less of a coherent hegemonic ideology of the ruling class, more a deliberate attempt to de-hegemonise any potential opposition. As effective leadership and direction are removed, any attempt at a hegemonic project descends into incoherence.** The pluralism of postmodernism soon passes over into fragmentation and the reinforcing of alienated identities. Lenin’s theory, by contrast, attempts to connect a theory of organization to a hegemonic project. His writings on democratic centralism should not therefore be viewed as mere organizational concerns, they are political matters relating to the organization of the political vanguard and through them the wider social forces. Hence democratic centralism refers to the organization of the party as a vanguard party. Recognizing the stratified nature of social groups and classes, the Leninist theory of organization seeks to relate first to the political vanguard and the most advanced workers and through them to the broader masses. (p.50)

### Link: Choice/Autonomy

#### Emphasis on choice and will is a capitalist tactic to divide resistance. Zizek ‘05

ZiZek, 2005, July 15 [“Against Human Rights” New Left Review] Pgs. 115-131 Unfreedom of  choice

**As to freedom of choice: I have written elsewhere of the pseudo-choice offered to the adolescents of Amish communities who, after the strictest of upbringings, are invited at the age of seventeen to plunge themselves into every excess of contemporary capitalist culture**—a whirl of fast cars, wild sex, drugs, drink and so forth .2 After a couple of years, they are allowed to choose whether they want to return to the Amish way. **Since they have been brought up in virtual ignorance of American society, the youngsters are quite unprepared to cope with such permissiveness, which in most cases generates a backlash of unbearable anxiety. The** 2 ‘The constitution is dead. Long live proper politics’, Guardian, 4 June 2005. 118 n lr 34 **vast majority vote to return to the seclusion of their communities. This is a perfect case of the difficulties that invariably accompany ‘freedom of choice’:** **while Amish children are formally given a free choice, the conditions in which they must make it render the choice unfree.** The problem of pseudo-choice also demonstrates the limitations of the standard liberal attitude towards Muslim women who wear the veil: acceptable if it is their own free choice rather than imposed on them by husbands or family. However, the moment a woman dons the veil as the result of personal choice, its meaning changes completely: it is no longer a sign of belonging to the Muslim community, but an expression of idiosyncratic individuality. In other words, **a choice is always a meta-choice, a choice of the modality of the choice itself:** it is only the woman who does not choose to wear a veil that effectively chooses a choice. This is why, in our secular liberal democracies, people who maintain a substantial religious allegiance are in a subordinate position: their faith is ‘tolerated’ as their own personal choice, but the moment they present it publicly as what it is for them—a matter of substantial belonging—they stand accused of ‘fundamentalism’. **Plainly, the ‘subject of free choice’, in the ‘tolerant’, multicultural sense, can only emerge as the result of an extremely violent process of being uprooted from one’s particular life-world.** The material force of the ideological notion of ‘free choice’ within capitalist democracy was well illustrated by the fate of the Clinton Administration’s ultra-modest health reform programme. The medical lobby (twice as strong as the infamous defence lobby) succeeded in imposing on the public the idea that universal healthcare would somehow threaten freedom of choice in that domain. Against this conviction, all enumeration of ‘hard facts’ proved ineffective. **We are here at the very nerve-centre of liberal ideology: freedom of choice, grounded in the notion of the ‘psychological’ subject, endowed with propensities which he or she strives to realize. And this especially holds today, in the era of a ‘risk society’ in which the ruling ideology endeavours to** **sell us the very insecurities caused by the dismantling of the welfare state as the opportunity for new freedoms.** If labour flexibilization means you have to change jobs every year, why not see it as a liberation from the constraints of a permanent career, a chance to reinvent yourself and realize the hidden potential of your personality? If there is a shortfall on your standard health insurance and retirement plan, meaning you have to žižek: Human Rights 119 opt for extra coverage, why not perceive it as an additional opportunity to choose: either a better lifestyle now or long-term security? Should this predicament cause you anxiety, the ‘second modernity’ ideologist will diagnose you as desiring to ‘escape from freedom’, of an immature sticking to old stable forms. Even better, **when this is inscribed into the ideology of the subject as the ‘psychological’ individual, pregnant with natural abilities, you will automatically tend to interpret all these changes as the outcome of your personality, not as the result of being thrown around by market forces.**

### Link: Identity Politics

#### Fixation on particular identities prevents coalition building needed to fight capitalism. Dean ‘05

Dean, Teaches Political Theory @ Hobart and William Smith Colleges, 2005 [Jodi, Žižek’s Politics, p.115-9]

Unlike most critical thinkers identified with the Left, Žižek rejects the current emphasis on multicultural tolerance. He has three primary reasons for rejecting multiculturalism as it is currently understood in cultural studies and democratic theory. **First**, agreeing with Wendy Brown, he argues that **multiculturalism today rests on an acceptance of global capitalism. Insofar as Capital's deterritorializations create the conditions for the proliferation of multiple, fluid, political subjectivities, new social movements and identity politics rely on a political terrain established by global capitalism.** As I explained with regard to the notion of class struggle in Chapter Two, **multiculturalism ultimately accepts and depends on the depoliticization of the economy: "the way the economy functions (the need to cut social welfare, etc.) is accepted as a simple insight into the objective state of things.**"^" We might think here of feminist struggles over the right to an abortion, political work toward marriage benefits for same-sex couples, and energies spent on behalf of movies and television networks that target black audiences. In efforts such as these, **political energy focuses on culture and leaves the economy as a kind of unquestioned, taken-for granted basis of the way things are.** This is not to say that identity politics are trivial. On the contrary, Žižek fully acknowledges the way these new forms of political subjectivization "thoroughly reshaped our entire political and cultural landscape." The problem is that **capitalism has adapted to these new political forms, incorporating previously transgressive urges and turning culture itself into its central component**. To be sure, Žižek ‘s argument would be stronger were he to think of new social movements as vanishing or displaced mediators. **Identity politics opened up new spaces and opportunities for capitalist intensification. As new social movements transformed the lifeworld into something to be questioned and changed, they disrupted fixed identities and created opportunities for experimentation. The market entered to provide these opportunities**. Consider gay media. Joshua Gamson observes that while gay portal sites initially promised to offer safe and friendly spaces for gay community building, they now function primarily "to deliver a market share to corporations." In this gay media, "community needs are conflated with consumption desires, and community equated with market."41 **Social victories paved the way for market incursions into and the commodification of ever more aspects of experience. Once cultural politics morphed into capitalist culture, identity politics lost its radical edge**. With predictable frequency, the Republican Right in the United States regularly accuses the 110 Left of playing the race card whenever there is opposition to a non- Anglo political appointee. A **second** argument Žižek employs against multiculturalism concerns the way **multicultural tolerance is part of the same matrix as racist violence. On the one hand, multicultural respect for the other is a way of asserting the superiority of the multiculturalists. The multiculturalist adopts an emptied-out, disembodied perspective toward an embodied, ethnic other. The ethnic other makes the universal position of the multiculturalist possible. Not only does this attitude disavow the particularity of the multiculturalist's own position, but it also repeats the key gesture of global corporate capitalism: the big corporations will eat up, colonize, exploit, and commodity anything. They are not biased. They are empty machines following the logic of Capital. On the other hand, tolerance toward the other "passes imperceptibly into a destructive hatred of all ('fundamentalist') Others who do not fit into our idea of tolerance-in short, against all actual Others."4i The idea is that the liberal democrat, or multiculturalist, is against hatred and harassment. Tolerance is tolerance for another who also does not hate or harass, that is, tolerance for an other who is not really so other at all.46 It thus works in tandem with a right not to be harassed, not to be victimized, inconvenienced by, or exposed to the particular enjoyment of another.47 To this extent, the multicultural position blurs into a kind of racism such that respect is premised on agreement and identity**. The Other with deep fundamental beliefs, who is invested in a set of unquestionable convictions, whose enjoyment is utterly incomprehensible to me, is not the other of multiculturalism. For Žižek, then, today's tolerant liberal multiculturalism is "an experience of the Other deprived of its Otherness (the idealized Other who dances fascinating dances and has an ecologically sound holistic approach to reality, while practices like wife-beating remain out of sight . . .)."48 Just as in Eastern Europe after the fall of communism, so today's reflexive multicultural tolerance has as its opposite, and thus remains caught in the matrix of, a hard kernel of fundamentalism, of irrational, excessive, enjoyment. The concrete realization of rational inclusion and tolerance coincides with contingent, irrational, violence. Finally, Žižek's **third** argument against multiculturalism is that **it precludes politicization.** Žižek uses the **example** of the animated film series about dinosaurs, The Land Before Time,produced by Steven Spielberg The clearest articulation of the hegemonic liberal multiculturalist ideology," **The Land Before Time iterates the basic message that everyone is different and all should learn to live with these differences-big and small, strong and weak, carnivore and herbivore. In the films, the dinosaurs sing songs about how one should not worry about being eaten because underneath those big teeth are real fears and anxieties that everyone shares. Of course, this image of cooperative dinosaurs is profoundly false.** As Žižek asks, what does it really mean to say that it takes all kinds? "Does that mean nice and brutal, poor and rich, victims and torturer^?"^^ **The vision of a plurality of horizontal differences precludes the notion of a vertical antagonism that cuts through the social body. Some are more powerful. Some do want to kill-and denying this in an acceptance of differences prevents the politicization of this inequality. To say that in our difference we are really all alike, underneath it all, disavows the underlying social antagonism. It prevents us from acknowledging and confronting the way that class struggle cuts through and conditions the multiplicity of differences.** We can approach the same point from another direction. **Identity politics today emphasizes the specificity of each identity and experience. Particular differences are supposed to be acknowledged and respected. As Žižek points out, the notion of social justice that corresponds to this view depends on asserting the rights of and redressing the wrongs inflicted upon victims. Institutionally, then, identity politics "requires an intricate police apparatus (for identifying the group in question, for punishing offenders against its rights . . . for providing the preferential treatment which should compensate for the wrong this group has suffered."'" Rather than opening up a terrain of political struggle, functioning as human rights that designate the very space of politicization, identity politics works through a whole series of depoliticizing moves to locate, separate, and redress wrong^."^ Systemic problems are reformulated as personal issues. No particular wrong or harm can then stand in for the "universal wrong."'" Multiculturalism is thus a dimension of postpolitics insofar as it prevents the universalization of particular demands.**

### Impact: Poverty

#### Capitalism is the root cause of poverty. The Kritik turns case. Wainwright ‘13

Hilary Wainwright. The Poverty of Capitalism: roundtable. http://www.resilience.org/stories/2013-12-17/the-poverty-of-capitalism-roundtable

The Poverty of Capitalism starts from the gross injustice of contemporary capitalism and goes on to identify global multinational corporations as the real sources of power behind capitalism. John, can you tell us a bit about how and why you came to write the book? John The book is designed to situate all of the things that War on Want works on, all the injustices around the world, very firmly within the struggle against capitalism and the globalised capitalist economy. The starting point is that we have just come through this massive crisis of capitalism, and yet in just a trice you have the whole system being remade in exactly the same form. It’s as if you have a terrible heart attack and surgery, you’ve just come out of intensive care and the doctor says there’s no need to change anything of your previous life, don’t exercise much and keep up your intake of fatty foods! It’s got that sense that we’ve learnt nothing at all, just going back to exactly where we were and hoping to avoid the same problems. Doreen Exactly. We have to look at the structural causes of the poverty that John is talking about, a poverty that has been grotesquely exacerbated over the last four decades of neoliberalism. If we say we have to look at causes rather than symptoms, the underlying argument is that poverty isn’t a matter of distribution, so it can’t be solved by redistribution. What’s at issue is reorganising the structures that have produced the poverty in the first place. John We have learnt as a result of the crisis that capitalism is at the heart of the problem – a system set up for the benefit of the few and based on the impoverishment of the many. Doreen In a sense neoliberalism has forced the issues onto the agenda in a way that I don’t think was the case under social democracy. To me that means we must seize this moment and have a particularly aggressive attack on inequality. Francisco And let’s not forget that neoliberalism didn’t start in the UK or US. It started in Chile in 1973 and was so brutal that democracy had to be destroyed and 10,000 people assassinated for them to implement what they wanted. The levels of exploitation, abuse, imposition, the way the sovereignty of the country was sold out, the wave of privatisation and the horrible consequences for the population . . . it makes you sick. Had they been able to privatise air, they would have done. But even where formal liberal-democratic institutions aren’t assaulted so directly as in Chile under Allende, markets have effectively overridden any pretence of democratic representation. Doreen Yes absolutely. We need to talk about democracy because the accumulation of power into capital under neoliberalism hasn’t only exacerbated inequality in terms of income and poverty but has absolutely eviscerated democracy. Inequality is not only economic but about voice, political voice and political interest.

### Impact: Root Cause (Oppression)

#### Class focus must come first – it is the root cause of all oppression. Kovel 07,

Kovel, Prof. of Social Studies @ Bard, 2007 [Joel, “The Enemy of Nature”, p. 140-]

<If, however, we ask the question of efficacy, that is, which split sets the others into motion, then priority would have to be given to class, for the plain reason that class relations entail the state as an instrument of enforcement and control, and it is the state that shapes and organizes the splits that appear in human ecosystems. Thus class is both logically and historically distinct from other forms of exclusion (hence we should not talk of "classism" to go along with "sexism" and "racism," and "species-ism"). This is, first of all, because class is an essentially man-made category, without root in even a mystified biology. We cannot, in other words, imagine a human world without gender distinctions - although we can imagine a world without domination by gender. But a world without class is eminently imaginable - indeed, such was the human world for the great majority of our species' time on earth, during all of which considerable fuss was made over gender. Historically, the difference arises because "class" signifies one side of a larger figure that includes a state apparatus whose conquests and regulations create races and shape gender relations. Thus there will be no true resolution of racism so long as class society stands, inasmuch as a racially oppressed society implies the activities of a class-defending state." Nor can gender inequality be legislated away so long as class society, with its state, demands the super-exploitation of woman's labor. Class society continually generates gender, racial, ethnic oppressions, and the like, which take on a life of their own, as well as profoundly affecting the concrete relations of class itself. It follows that class politics must be fought out in terms of all the active forms of social splitting. It is the management of these divisions that keeps state society functional. Thus though each person in a class society is reduced from what s/he can become, the varied reductions can be combined into the great stratified regimes of history - this one becoming a fierce warrior, that one a routine-loving clerk, another a submissive seamstress, and so on, until we reach today's personifications of capital and captains of industry. Yet no matter how functional a class society, the profundity of its ecological violence ensures a basic antagonism which drives history onward. History is the history of class society - because no matter how modified, so powerful a schism is bound to work itself through to the surface, provoke resistance (i.e. "class struggle"), and lead to the succession of powers. The relation of class can be mystified without end - only consider the extent to which religion exists for just this purpose, or watch a show glorifying the police on television - yet so long as we have any respect for human nature, we must recognize that so fundamental an antagonism as would steal the vital force of one person for the enrichment of another cannot be conjured away. The state is what steps forward to manage this conflict so that the ruling class gets its way without causing society to fly apart. It is the state's province to deal with class contradiction as it works itself out in numberless ways - to build its armies and use them in conquest (thereby reinforcing patriarchal and violent values), to codify property, to set forth laws to punish those who would transgress property relations, and to regulate contracts, and debts between individuals who play by the rules, to institutionalize police, courts and prisons to back up those laws, or to certify what is proper and right in the education of the young, or the marriage of the sexes, or establish the religions that justify God's ways to mere man, or to institutionalize science and education - in sum, to regulate and enforce the class structure, and to channel the flux of history in the direction of the elites. The state institutionalizes patriarchy as well as class, and hence maintains the societal ground for the gendered bifurcation of nature. Furthermore, inasmuch as the modern state is also a nation-state, it employs the attachment of a people to its land as a source of legitimation, and thus incorporates the history of nature into myths of wholeness and integrity. All aspects of the domination of nature are in fact woven into the fabric by means of which the state holds society together, from which it follows that to give coherence to this narrative and make a difference in it, we have to attend to the state and its ultimate dependence upon maintaining the class structure. All of this is to play a basic role in the unfolding of contemporary ecological struggles, as we discuss in the next section.>

### Impact: Environmental Destruction (Case Turn)

#### Failure to eliminate capitalism means that environmental preservation is impossible—turns case. Foster 01,

Foster, 01 (John Bellamy Foster, editor of Monthly Review and professor of sociology at the University of Oregon. “Ecology Against Capitalism” http://www.monthlyreview.org/1001jbf.htm)

Capitalism and its economists have generally treated ecological problems as something to be avoided rather than seriously addressed. Economic growth theorist Robert Solow wrote in the American Economic Review in May 1974, in the midst of the famous “limits to growth” debate, that, “if it is very easy to substitute other factors for natural resources, then there is in principle no ‘problem.’ The world can, in effect, get along without natural resources, so exhaustion is just an event, not a catastrophe.” Solow, who later received the Nobel Prize in economics, was speaking hypothetically and did not actually go so far as to say that near–perfect substitutability was a reality or that natural resources were fully dispensable. But he followed up his hypothetical point by arguing that the degree of substitutability at present is so great that all worries of Doomsday ecological prophets could be put aside. Whatever minor flaws existed in the price system, leading to the failure to account for environmental costs, could be cured through the use of market incentives, with government playing a very limited role in the creation of such incentives. What had outraged orthodox economists such as Solow, when a group of MIT whiz kids first raised the issue of the limits to growth in the early 1970s, was that the argument was premised on the same kinds of mathematical computer forecasting models, pointing to exponential growth trends, that economists frequently used themselves. But in this case, the focus was on exponential increases in the demands placed on a finite environment, rather than the magic of economic expansion. If the forecasting of the limits to growth theorists was full of problems, it nonetheless highlighted the truism—conveniently ignored by capitalism and its economists—that infinite expansion within a finite environment was a contradiction in terms. It thus posed a potential catastrophic conflict between global capitalism and the global environment. Capitalist economies are geared first and foremost to the growth of profits, and hence to economic growth at virtually any cost—including the exploitation and misery of the vast majority of the world’s population. This rush to grow generally means rapid absorption of energy and materials and the dumping of more and more wastes into the environment—hence widening environmental degradation. Just as significant as capitalism’s emphasis on unending expansion is its short–term time horizon in determining investments. In evaluating any investment prospect, owners of capital figure on getting their investment back in a calculable period (usually quite short) and profits forever after. It is true that a longer–term perspective is commonly adopted by investors in mines, oil wells, and other natural resources. In these areas the dominant motives are obviously to secure a supply of materials for the manufacture of a final product, and to obtain a rate of return that over the long run is exceptionally high. But even in these cases the time horizon rarely exceeds ten to fifteen years—a far cry from the fifty to one hundred year (or even more) perspective needed to protect the biosphere. With respect to those environmental conditions that bear most directly on human society, economic development needs to be planned so as to include such factors as water resources and their distribution, availability of clean water, rationing and conservation of nonrenewable resources, disposal of wastes, and effects on population and the environment associated with the specific locations chosen for industrial projects. These all represent issues of sustainability, i.e., raising questions of intergenerational environmental equity, and cannot be incorporated within the short–term time horizon of nonphilanthropic capital, which needs to recoup its investment in the foreseeable future, plus secure a flow of profits to warrant the risk and to do better than alternative investment opportunities. Big investors need to pay attention to the stock market, which is a source of capital for expansion and a facilitator of mergers and acquisitions. Corporations are expected to maintain the value of their stockholder’s equity and to provide regular dividends. A significant part of the wealth of top corporate executives depends on the growth in the stock market prices of the stock options they hold. Moreover, the huge bonuses received by top corporate executives are influenced not only by the growth in profits but often as well by the rise in the prices of company stock. A long–run point of view is completely irrelevant in the fluctuating stock market. The perspective in stock market “valuation” is the rate of profit gains or losses in recent years or prospects for next year’s profits. Even the much–trumpeted flood of money going into the New Economy with future prospects in mind, able momentarily to overlook company losses, has already had its comeuppance. Speculative investors looking to reap rich rewards via the stock market or venture capital may have some patience for a year or so, but patience evaporates very quickly if the companies invested in keep having losses. Besides investing their own surplus funds, corporations also borrow via long–term bonds. For this, they have to make enough money to pay interest and to set aside a sinking fund for future repayment of bonds. The short–term time horizon endemic to capitalist investment decisions thus becomes a critical factor in determining its overall environmental effects. Controlling emissions of some of the worst pollutants (usually through end–of–pipe methods) can have a positive and almost immediate effect on people’s lives. However, the real protection of the environment requires a view of the needs of generations to come. A good deal of environmental long–term policy for promoting sustainable development has to do with the third world. This is exactly the place where capital, based in the rich countries, requires the fastest return on its investments, often demanding that it get its initial investment back in a year or two. The time horizon that governs investment decisions in these as in other cases is not a question of “good” capitalists who are willing to give up profits for the sake of society and future generations—or “bad” capitalists who are not—but simply of how the system works. Even those industries that typically look ahead must sooner or later satisfy the demands of investors, bondholders, and banks. The foregoing defects in capitalism’s relation to the environment are evident today in all areas of what we now commonly call “the environmental crisis,” which encompasses problems as diverse as: global warming, destruction of the ozone layer, removal of tropical forests, elimination of coral reefs, overfishing, extinction of species, loss of genetic diversity, the increasing toxicity of our environment and our food, desertification, shrinking water supplies, lack of clean water, and radioactive contamination—to name just a few. The list is very long and rapidly getting longer, and the spatial scales on which these problems manifest themselves are increasing.

#### Capitalism will cause environmental catastrophe—the entire system must be reversed—turns case.. Foster 02,

Foster, 02 (John Bellamy, Professor of environmental sociology, Marxism, and political economy at the University of Oregon, Ecology Against Capitalism, p 66-67)

The consequences of such shortsighted attention to economic growth and profit before all else are of course enormous, since they call into question the survivability of the entire world. It is an inescapable fact that human history is at a turning point, the result of a fundamental change in the relationship between human beings and the environment. The scale at which people transform energy and materials has now reached a level that rivals elemental natural processes. Human society is adding carbon to the atmosphere at a level that is equal to about 7 percent of the natural carbon exchange of atmosphere and oceans. The carbon dioxide content of the atmosphere as a result has grown by a quarter in the last 200 years, with more than half of this increase since 1950. Human beings now use (take or transform) 25 percent of the plant mass fixed by photosynthesis over the entire earth, land and sea, and 40 percent of the photosynthetic product on land. Largely as a result of synthetic fertilizers, humanity fixed about as much nitrogen in the environment as does nature. With human activities now rivaling nature in scale, actions that in the past merely produced local environmental crises now have global implications. Moreover, environmental effects that once seemed simple and trivial, such as increases in carbon dioxide emissions, have now suddenly become threats to the stability of the fundamental ecological cycles of the planet. Destruction of the ozone layer, the greenhouse effect, annihilation of ancient and tropical forests, species extinction, reductions in genetic diversity, production of toxic and radioactive wastes, contamination of water resources, soil depletion, depletion of essential raw materials, desertification, the growth of world population spurred by rising poverty – all represent ominous trends the full impact of which, singly or in combination, is scarcely to be imagined at present. “With the appearance of a continent-sized hole in the Earth’s protective ozone layer and the threat of global warming,” Barry Commoner has written, “even droughts, floods, and heat waves may become unwitting acts of man.” The sustainability of both human civilization and global life processes depends not on the mere slowing down of these dire trends, but on their reversal. Nothing in the history of capitalism, however, suggests that the system will be up to such a task. On the contrary there is every indication that the system, left to its own devices, will gravitate toward the “let them eat pollution” stance so clearly enunciated by the chief economist of the World Bank. Fortunately for the world, however, capitalism has never been allowed to develop for long entirely in accordance with its own logic. Opposition forces always emerge – whether in the form of working class struggles for social betterment or conservation movements dedicated to overcoming environmental depredations – that force the system to moderate its worst tendencies. And to some extend the ensuing reforms can result in lasting, beneficial constraints on the market. What the capitalist class cannot accept, however, are changes that will likely result in the destruction of the system itself. Long before reform movement threaten the accumulation process as a whole, therefore, counter-forces are set in motion by the ruling interests, and the necessary elemental changes are headed off. And there’s the rub. Where radical change is called for little is accomplished within the system and the underlying crisis intensifies over time. Today this is particularly evident in the ecological realm. For the nature of the global environmental crisis is such that the fate of the entire planet and social and ecological issues of enormous complexity are involved, all traceable to the forms of production now prevalent**.** It is impossible to prevent the world’s environmental crisis from getting progressively worse unless root problems of production, distribution, technology, and growth are dealt with on a global scale. And the more that such questions are raised, the more it becomes evidence that capitalism is unsustainable – ecologically, economically, politically, and morally – and must be superseded.

### Impact: Nuclear War

#### Capitalism threatens mass nuclear annihilation. Webb 04,

Webb, 04 (Sam Webb, National Chairman, Communist Party USA. “War, Capitalism, and George W. Bush.” 4-20-04. http://www.pww.org/article/view/ 4967/1/207/O/)

Capitalism was never a warm, cuddly, stable social system. It came into the world dripping with blood from every pore, as Marx described it, laying waste to old forms of production and ways of life in favor of new, more efficient manufacturing. Since then it has combined nearly uninterrupted transformation of the instruments of production with immense wealth for a few and unrelieved exploitation, insecurity, misery, and racial and gender inequality for the many, along with periodic wars, and a vast zone of countries imprisoned in a seemingly inescapable web of abject poverty. Yet as bad as that record is, its most destructive effects on our world could still be ahead. Why do I say that? Because capitalism, with its imperatives of capital accumulation, profit maximization and competition, is the cause of new global problems that threaten the prospects and lives of billions of people worldwide, and, more importantly, it is also a formidable barrier to humankind’s ability to solve these problems. Foremost among these, in addition to ecological degradation, economic crises, population pressures, and endemic diseases, is the threat of nuclear mass annihilation.

#### Capitalism has inherent tendencies towards militarism and war, only anti-capitalist movements can solve. Webb 04,

Webb, 04 (Sam Webb, National Chairman, Communist Party USA. “War, Capitalism, and George W. Bush.” 4-20-04. http://www.pww.org/article/view/ 4967/1/207/O/)

In the longer run, however, it is necessary to replace the system of capitalism. With its expansionary logic to accumulate capital globally and its competitive rivalries, capitalism has an undeniable structural tendency to militarism and war. This doesn’t mean that nuclear war is inevitable. But it does suggest that nuclear war is a latent, ever-present possibility in a world in which global capital is king. Whether that occurs depends in large measure on the outcome of political struggle within and between classes and social movements at the national and international level. In the 20th century, the world community escaped a nuclear Armageddon, but will we be so lucky in this century? No one knows for sure. What will improve our chances immeasurably is the skill with which socialist and left forces link the immediate struggles for peace in the election arena and elsewhere with the longer-term task of transcending capitalism and constructing a socialist society, in which the drive to accumulate capital and maximize profits and, in turn, the tendency to aggression, militarism and war, is completely absent.

### Impact: Resource War

#### Growth inevitably causes global resource wars. Trainer 95,

**Trainer 95** (Ted Trainer is a professor at the School of Social Work, University of Wales, “The Conserver Society; Alternatives for sustainability”, pg. 162)

Peaceful world order in which all can feel secure is totally impossible if there is a determination to pursue affluence and growth. Everyone wants peace and security, but what the peace movement has almost entirely overlooked is the fact that if everyone continues to pursue higher material living standards and GNP then in the long run there can be no other outcome than more and more conflict of various kinds. This is simply because there is no possibility of people living as affluently as the few in rich countries do now, let alone living at the levels we insist on growing to as the years go by. There is a gigantic struggle going on over the distribution of resources, and this can only become more intense in future years. Following are some of the types of conflict and violence that inevitably result. First there is the vicious class conflict that occurs when desperate peasants finally try to hit back at their exploiters and are met with state violence. About 3 per cent of Third World people own about 80 per cent of Third World land. They leave much of it idle, and grow crops like carnations for American supermarkets on the rest. Cattle are air freighted into Haiti, fattened up and air-freighted out to hamburger outlets, while the infant death rate in Haiti is over twenty times the rate in the rich countries. When people eventually rebel against conditions like this they usually encounter brutal repression from state forces operating on behalf of tiny, wealthy and powerful ruling elites. Perhaps 15,000 Guatemalans were killed by agents of the state between 1970 and 1975. And where do these regimes obtain their guns? Mostly from us, the rich nations. The overdeveloped countries, east and west, have gone to a great deal of effort to support numerous brutal and greedy regimes in the Third World. Many of these would have been swept away long ago had it not been for the economic assistance, the military equipment and the training given to them by the rich countries.

#### The capitalist drive for resources will ensure that wars grow bigger and more intense over time. Maszaros 95,

Meszaros, 95 (Istivan, professor emeritus at the University of Sussex, Beyond Capital, pg. 886)

The crisis we face, then, is not simply a political crisis, but the general structural crisis of the capitalistic institutions of social control in their entirety. Here the main point is that the institutions of capitalism are inherently violent and aggressive: they are built on the fundamental premise of ‘war if the “normal” methods of expansion fail.’ (Besides, he periodic destruction—by whatever means, including the most violent ones—of over-produced capital, is an inherent necessity of the ‘normal’ functioning of this system: the vital condition of its recovery from crisis and depression.) The blind ‘natural law’ of the market mechanism carries with it that the grave social problems necessarily associated with capital production and concentration are never solved, only postponed, and indeed—since postponement cannot work indefinitely—transferred to the military plane. Thus, the ‘sense’ of the hierarchically structured institutions of capitalism is given in its ultimate reference to the violent ‘fighting out’ of the issues, in the international arena, for the socioeconomic units—following the inner logic of their development—grow bigger and bigger, and their problems and contradictions increasingly more intense and grave. Growth and expansion are immanent necessities of the capitalist system of production and when the local limits are reached there is no way out except by violently readjusting the prevailing relation of forces.

### Impact: Neo-Colonial Extinction

#### The logic of capitalism allows for neo-colonial sacrifice—culminates in extinction. Santos 03,

Santos, 03 Professor of Sociology at the School of Economics, University of Coimbra (Portugal), Distinguished Legal Scholar at the University of Wisconsin-Madison Law School, Director of the Center for Social Studies of the University of Coimbra, [Boaventura de Sousa, “Collective Suicide?” Bad Subjects, Issue 63, April, http://www.ces.uc.pt/opiniao/bss/072en.php]

According to Franz Hinkelammert, the West has repeatedly been under the illusion that it should try to save humanity by destroying part of it. This is a salvific and sacrificial destruction, committed in the name of the need to radically materialize all the possibilities opened up by a given social and political reality over which it is supposed to have total power. This is how it was in colonialism, with the genocide of indigenous peoples, and the African slaves. This is how it was in the period of imperialist struggles, which caused millions of deaths in two world wars and many other colonial wars. This is how it was in Stalinism, with the Gulag and in Nazism, with the holocaust. And now today, this is how it is in neoliberalism, with the collective sacrifice of the periphery and even the semiperiphery of the world system. With the war against Iraq, it is fitting to ask whether what is in progress is a new genocidal and sacrificial illusion, and what its scope might be. It is above all appropriate to ask if the new illusion will not herald the radicalization and the ultimate perversion of the western illusion: destroying all of humanity in the illusion of saving it. Sacrificial genocide arises from a totalitarian illusion that is manifested in the belief that there are no alternatives to the present-day reality and that the problems and difficulties confronting it arise from failing to take its logic of development to its ultimate consequences. If there is unemployment, hunger and death in the Third World, this is not the result of market failures; instead, it is the outcome of the market laws not having been fully applied. If there is terrorism, this is not due to the violence of the conditions that generate it; it is due, rather, to the fact that total violence has not been employed to physically eradicate all terrorists and potential terrorists. This political logic is based on the supposition of total power and knowledge, and on the radical rejection of alternatives; it is ultra-conservative in that it aims to infinitely reproduce the status quo. Inherent to it is the notion of the end of history. During the last hundred years, the West has experienced three versions of this logic, and, therefore, seen three versions of the end of history: Stalinism, with its logic of insuperable efficiency of the plan; Nazism, with its logic of racial superiority; and neoliberalism, with its logic of insuperable efficiency of the market. The first two periods involved the destruction of democracy. The last one trivializes democracy, disarming it in the face of social actors sufficiently powerful to be able to privatize the State and international institutions in their favour. I have described this situation as a combination of political democracy and social fascism. One current manifestation of this combination resides in the fact that intensely strong public opinion, worldwide, against the war is found to be incapable of halting the war machine set in motion by supposedly democratic rulers. At all these moments, a death drive, a catastrophic heroism, predominates, the idea of a looming collective suicide, only preventable by the massive destruction of the other. Paradoxically, the broader the definition of the other and the efficacy of its destruction, the more likely collective suicide becomes. In its sacrificial genocide version, neoliberalism is a mixture of market radicalization, neoconservatism and Christian fundamentalism. Its death drive takes a number of forms, from the idea of "discardable populations", referring to citizens of the Third World not capable of being exploited as workers and consumers, to the concept of "collateral damage", to refer to the deaths, as a result of war, of thousands of innocent civilians. The last, catastrophic heroism, is quite clear on two facts: according to reliable calculations by the Non-Governmental Organization MEDACT, in London, between 48 and 260 thousand civilians will die during the war and in the three months after (this is without there being civil war or a nuclear attack); the war will cost 100 billion dollars, enough to pay the health costs of the world's poorest countries for four years. Is it possible to fight this death drive? We must bear in mind that, historically, sacrificial destruction has always been linked to the economic pillage of natural resources and the labor force, to the imperial design of radically changing the terms of economic, social, political and cultural exchanges in the face of falling efficiency rates postulated by the maximalist logic of the totalitarian illusion in operation. It is as though hegemonic powers, both when they are on the rise and when they are in decline, repeatedly go through times of primitive accumulation, legitimizing the most shameful violence in the name of futures where, by definition, there is no room for what must be destroyed. In today's version, the period of primitive accumulation consists of combining neoliberal economic globalization with the globalization of war. The machine of democracy and liberty turns into a machine of horror and destruction.

### Alternative: Marxist Socialism

#### The alternative is to reject my opponent in favor of embracing pedagogical Marxist socialism. It is the role of educators to expand our understandings of alternatives to capitalism. D’Annibale ‘06

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The Boy Emperor and his minions would have us believe that our only choice is to embrace the manic logic of American imperialist capitalism disguised as “democracy.” But as concerned citizens, activists, educators, workers, and students, we must vigorously challenge such an assertion. While they would like to have the citizens of the United States (indeed, the whole world) [to] sit back and let them take care of “democracy,” we need to remind ourselves that democracy is not a spectator sport. It cannot exist in a context where corporations rule the world and where the fruits produced by labouring humanity are horded by the global capitalist elite. It cannot exist when anyone who opposes the policies of the IMF, the World Bank, and/or th e WTO or any nation which rejects the “Washington consensus” runs the risk of being tarred and feathered with the label of “terrorist.” It cannot exist when governments lie to their citizens and when wars are fought to increase the profit margins of multinational corporations at the expense of innocents slaughtered and bodies mangled on battlefields strewn with limbs lost and dreams dashed. Democracy cannot exist when entire populations are being obliterated through genocide, when people are starving, when human rights are being trampled upon both at home and abroad. Capitalism, in short, cannot be “rescued for democracy” for “capitalism is beyond salvation” and so is the very notion of democracy “so long as it looks to capitalism to support it” (McLaren, 2007, xvii). At this point in history, McLaren (2005; 2006; 2007) urges us to expose the inner workings of the so-called “benevolent” imperialism of Pax Americana in all its social ugliness and to emphasize that the agenda of neoliberalism and its concomitant militarism is driven by corporate interests that are fundamentally at odds with the interests of working people. We need to start asking and exploring the “big” questions. We need a new vision of human sociality and we need to dare to speak the language of socialism. To that end, McLaren’s revolutionary critical pedagogy can offer us some valuable insights. Against Capital This is definitely not a postcapitalist world, nor is it a post-Marxist one (Foster, 2002, p. 43). Cutting ourselves off from Marx is to cut off our investigative noses to satisfy the superficial face of contemporary intellectual fashion (Harvey, 2000, p. 12). [i]mperialism has, from the beginning, been part and parcel of capitalism and will not be eliminated until capitalism itself is ended (Foster and McChesney, 2004, p. 11). McLaren points to a development that has troubled many progressive educators over the years, namely, the domestication of critical pedagogy within the academy. Once a fierce critic of U.S. imperialism and capitalist exploitation, critical pedagogy has become so “conceptually psychologized, so liberally humanized, so technologized, and so conceptually postmodernized that its current relationship to broader liberation struggles seems severely attenuated if not fatally terminated” (2005, p. 33). In light of such domesticating gestures, critical pedagogy seems to have lost its potential to serve as a trenchant challenge to globalized capital and U.S. imperialist aggression. As such McLaren’s attempts to revivify the political roots of critical pedagogy by reintroducing the language of class struggle and Marxist-humanism (under the rubric of revolutionary critical pedagogy) come at a much needed juncture. Since we live at a time when capitalism has become an unrepentant universal system, the basis of our struggles, of our resistance, of our revolutionary praxis must be grounded in an equally universalist narrative—that of socialism. We must transcend the deconstructive dalliances of those post-al theorists who have abandoned metanarratives—particularly those of Marxism and socialism—for in all of their deconstructive posturing they have ignored the most “meta of all metanarratives”—namely, the “creeping annexation of the globe for the dominance of capital over labouring humanity” (Ahmad, 1997, p. 364). It seems that in recent years, the only “ism” which hasn’t garnered the interest of many self-proclaimed radicals is that of capitalism. McLaren vividly calls our attention to this problematic void within so much of contemporary theory and urges us to utilize the tools of Marxist analysis to contest current social relations linked to the globalization of capital. He cautions us, however, that Marxist educationalists must also avoid the numbing altitudes of abstract cogitation that seldom touch political realities here on earth. Rather than speaking to one another in self-referential code, engaging in scholastic rituals, and navigating “theory for its own sake or for academic jollification,” they must demonstrate the utility of Marxism by applying it to political actualities and by working towards creating the “conditions for a social revolution” (McLaren, 2006, viii). This task has assumed an even greater importance in light of current conditions for as Jameson (1998, p. 136-137) reminds us we seem to be returning to “the most fundamental form of class struggle.” In this regard, the line of thought derived from Marx is far from obsolete. Given the entrenchment of neoliberal globalization practices and the global dominance of U.S. military might, McLaren (2006, p. 19) reminds us that class struggle is as important as it ever was, perhaps even more so. And as more and more of humanity faces the ravages of capitalism’s totalizing impulses and the savagery of wars fought on behalf of capital, his revolutionary critical pedagogy points to the need to understand and confront the “antagonistic relation between labor and capital” that “constitutes the essence of capitalism” (Ibid, p. 95). This entails a much different conceptualization of class than that offered by post-al theory which tends to view class as simply about habits and behaviour, cultural status, or social prestige, or that suggests that class is merely a language sign whose meaning is overpopulated with referents and therefore “undecidable.” Rather, class must be understood as both a lived culture and an objective entity. As an objective phenomenon, class is directly connected to where a person is located within the capitalist division of labor and it is labor that is the source of value. Capitalism is a system based on the imposition of “universal commodification, including centrally, the buying and selling of human-life time” (Dyer-Witheford, 1999, p. 9). Within capitalist forms of organization, human labor itself is a commodity which can be bought and sold just like any other. Such an arrangement reduces the creative capacities of humans and relegates them to the status of mere cogs in the machinery of various forms of production. Alienation, oppression, and the dissolution of democracy are inherent features in such an arrangement where labor-power is capitalized and commodified (McLaren, 2006). For these reasons and many others, it is imperative to work towards the de-commodification of human labor in ways that would reinvigorate its status as a form of meaningful, creative activity. This entails moving beyond a mere reformist agenda—one which calls for a friendlier, less brutalizing form of capitalism—to questioning the very nature of capital as a social relation rooted in the selling of human labor power. As McLaren (2006, p. 319) asserts, “we need to move towards a new social humanity . . . we need to work towards the goal of becoming associated producers, working under conditions . . . where the measure of wealth is not labor-time but solidarity, creativity, and the full development of human capacities.” This struggle, against a specific form of social being as a capitalized and commodified life form—the very struggle to be “human”—situates revolutionary Marxist-humanism “at the core of any project to implode capital’s social universe” (McLaren, 2006, p. 314). Contrary to those who have sounded the death knell of Marxism, Marxist-humanism is not straining against the boundaries of a closed ontology. Rather it is a set of living ideas that can help us better understand the world—and more importantly—can provide a point of departure on how to change it. Marxist-humanism can guide us in working towards the creation of a social universe outside of capital based on socialist principles and practices not just in the sense of negating today’s economic and political realities but of developing new human relations. It is after all capital that imposes on our lives certain forms of doing, certain forms of relating to one another, certain forms of being. Marxist-humanism can also educate us about the importance of class consciousness and class struggle in attempting to overcome the **brutal and** barbaric limits to human liberation set by capital.[xii] After all, the most powerful force on the planet is the working class—without their labor, the wheels of the machine would cease in turning. The only force that the capitalist class cannot do without is the working class that produces the food, processes the raw materials, educates the young, tends to the sick and the infirm, builds the arteries, moves the goods, and so on. Contrary to the conventional political wisdom and the post-al declarations that we live in an age without classes, the transnational working class is in fact growing—there are increasing numbers of people who “now depend—directly or indirectly—on the sale of their labor power for their own daily reproduction” (Panitch et al., 2000, p. ix). Although it is certainly apparent that there have been major changes in the class structure, they have not been in the direction that post-Marxists point to. In fact, the major changes have reinforced class differences and capitalist exploitation. Petras notes that there are now more “temporary wage workers than in the past” and that there are many more workers toiling in “unregulated labor markets (the so-called informal sector today) than in the past.” This issue of “unregulated exploitation” points not in the direction of “post-capitalism” but rather represents a return to “nineteenth century forms of labour exploitation” (1998, p. 5). That said, it is important to bear in mind that the bodies of work and the concepts produced by Marx to assess the intricacies of capitalism in the nineteenth century are not completely adequate for analyzing contemporary conditions. Any historical concept carries in itself specific historical indices and the structure it analyzes is an historical structure. Therefore, it is necessary to avoid the reification or “petrification” (to use of line from Marcuse, 1972) of Marxian concepts since that would violate the very core of Marx’s work—namely, the unity of theory and practice in relation to specific configurations of capitalism. Moreover, revolutionary praxis, is brought about by “approaching Marxism not as an inert body of ideas for contemplation but as a motive force for remaking society” (McLaren, 2007, p. 35). As such, it still provides the most powerful conceptual apparatus from which to construct a critique of contemporary capitalism and envision an alternative to it. The legacy of Marxist humanism and the revolutionary critical pedagogy espoused by McLaren remind[s] us that contrary to TINA, there are always alternatives. As a form of emancipatory critical knowledge that offers a systematic way of making sense of contemporary social life, the current configuration of imperial global capitalism, the alienating aspects of commodified human labor and their interconnectedness, revolutionary critical pedagogy simultaneously serves as an agent for changing the conditions which it condemns. It reminds us that whatever misunderstandings or confusion surrounding the notion of socialism—largely bound up with a mistaken identification of Marxism with its opposite, Stalinism—that the democratic and internationalist principles of socialism need to be reinvigorated among those serious about resisting the domination of capital. It reminds us—to paraphrase the words of Luxemburg (1971)—that the struggle for socialism must be created by the masses of labouring humanity who must break the chains of capitalism wherever they are forged. And above all, it reminds us that we cannot abandon hope. CONCLUSION: Hope Dies Last In the preface to the fifth edition of his landmark text, Life in Schools, McLaren declares that the “unfulfilled” democracy which he envisions is “unashamedly socialist.” In so doing, and in speaking as a “Marxist humanist who advocates a revolutionary praxis” (2007, p. xvii), he encourages us to think about a new humanism for the 21st century—one that is unrealized in any profound sense; one set against the 21st century American imperium; one which we can aspire to. This new humanism would confront the actual conditions of capitalist oppression, imperialism, neo-fascism and colonialism and not merely the texts of colonialism, imperialism and the like. It would give expression to the pain, sorrow, and degradation of the oppressed and the wretched of the earth as well as to their dreams of social change. This new humanism would recognize the creative potential of people to challenge and change collectively the circumstances which they inherit. It would be predicated on a firm commitment to human emancipation and the extension of human dignity and freedom to all people—a commitment to really universalize such values in concrete, practical and economic terms. It would go beyond calls for social justice that are embraced by liberals yet too often “antiseptically cleaved from the project of transforming capitalist social relations” (McLaren, 2007, p. 29). Rather, a new humanism would call for the transformation of those oppressive social arrangements, institutions and relations that have prevented the bulk of humankind from fulfilling its potential. The task of even imagining, let alone struggling for, such a new humanism may seem daunting but we must find our inspiration and strength in the emotion of hope. Hope is the freeing of possibility, with possibility serving as the dialectical partner of necessity. When hope is strong enough, it can bend the future backward towards the past, where, trapped between the two, the present can escape its orbit of inevitability and break the force of history’s hubris, so that what is struggled for no longer remains an inert idea frozen in the hinterland of “what is,” but becomes a reality out of “what could be.” Hope is the oxygen of dreams, and provides the stamina for revolutionary struggle. Revolutionary dreams are those in which dreamers dream until there are no longer dreamers but only the dreams themselves, shaping our everyday lives from moment to moment, and opening the causeways of possibility where abilities are nourished not for the reaping of profit, but for the satisfaction of needs and the full development of human potential (McLaren & Jaramillo, 2004, p. 89). In this passage McLaren beckons us to rescue the principle of hope from the abyss of cynicism, complacency, and apathy and to apply it to imagining something resembling a democratic form of socialism. He challenges us to safeguard the embers of hope smoldering amidst the rubble of war and to fuel even further the fires of hope wherever they may burn. And he challenges us, above all, to keep hope alive—whatever the circumstances—and to ensure, in the words of the legendary American historian, scholar, and activist Studs Terkel, that hope dies last.

### Alternative: Rejection Key

#### Rejecting capitalism is the first step—a refusal to believe in the system can topple empires. Monbiot 04,

Monbiot, 04 (George Monbiot, Professor of Philosophy at Bristol and Professor of Politics at Keele. Author, columnist, and political activist. “Manifesto for a New World Order.” p. 249)

It costs nothing to agree that something should be done; indeed people like us have been accepting this proposition for decades, and waiting for someone else to act on it. Constitutional change will begin only when we reach the more dangerous conclusion that 'I must act'. There have been many occasions over the past few years on which we have won the argument and lost the war. The campaigners who have exposed the injustices of the current global system often succeed in generating a widespread demand for change, and just as often discover that this demand has no outlet. Our opinions, in these circumstances, count for nothing until we act upon them. Until we present a direct constitutional challenge to its survival, or, through such measures as a threatened conditional default, alter the circumstances in which it operates, those who maintain the dictatorship of vested interests will read what we write and listen to what we say without the slightest sense of danger. In 16-19, after recoiling from the satisfaction he felt upon completing one of his revolutionary pamphlets, Gerrard Winstanley noted 'my mind was not at rest, because nothing was acted, and ... words and writings were all nothing. and must die, for action is the life of all, and if thou dost not act, thou dost nothing'. This manifesto, and all the publications like it, is worthless unless it provokes people to action. There are several reasons why we do not act. In most cases, the personal risk involved in the early stages of struggle outweighs the potential material benefit. Those who catalyse revolution are seldom the people who profit from it. In this struggle, most of us are not yet directly confronting armed force (though this may well change as we become effective), so the risks to which we expose ourselves and our families are, as yet, slighter than those encountered by other revolutionaries. Nor, of course, are the potential benefits of resistance as obvious, for those activists who live in the rich world, as the benefits of overthrowing Nazi occupation or deposing an indigenous tyrant, or breaking away from a formally constituted empire. While most of the people of the poor world have an acute need to change the circumstances which govern the way they live, the problems the protesters in rich nations contest belong to the second order of concern: we are not confronted by imminent starvation or death through waterborne disease, but by distant wars, economic instability, climate change and the exhaustion of resources; issues which seldom present immediate threats to our survival. But while the proposals in this manifesto offer little by way of material self-advancement to activists in the rich world, there is, in collective revolutionary action, something which appears to be missing from almost every other enterprise in modern secular life. It arises, I think, from the , intensity of the relationships forged in a collective purpose concentrated by adversity. It is the exultation which Christians call 'joy', but which, in the dry discourse of secular politics, has no recognized equivalent. It is the drug for which, once sampled, you will pay any price. All those with agency are confronted by a choice. We can use that agency to secure comfortable existence. We can for ourselves a safe and use our life, that one unrepeatable product of four billion years of serendipity and evolution, to earn a little more, to save a little more, to win the approval of our bosses and the envy of our neighbours. We can place upon our walls those tombstones which the living erect to themselves: the framed certificates of their acceptance into what Erich Fromm has called the 'necrophiliac' world of wealth and power. We can, quite rationally, subordinate our desire for liberty to our desire for security. Or we can use our agency to change the world, and, in changing it, to change ourselves. We will die and be forgotten with no less certainty than those who sought to fend off death by enhancing their material presence on the earth, but we will live before we die through the extremes of feeling which comfort would deny us. I do not presume to lecture those who have little agency -among them the majority who live in the poor world on how to manage their lives. Over the past five years in many of the countries of the poor world -though this is seldom reported in the West - people have tried to change their circumstances through explosive demonstrations of grief, anger and hope. I have sought, with this manifesto, simply to enhance that hope, by demonstrating that there may be viable alternatives to the systems that subjugate them. But for most of the people of the rich world, and the more prosperous people of the poor world, revolution offers the possibility of freedom from the constraints we impose upon ourselves. Freedom is the ability to act upon our beliefs. It expands, therefore, with the scope of the action we are prepared to contemplate. If we know that we will never act, we have no freedom: we will, for the rest of our lives, do as we are told. Almost everyone has some sense that other people should be treated as she would wish to be. Almost everyone, in other words, has a notion of justice, and for most people this notion, however formulated, sits somewhere close to the heart of their system of beliefs. If we do not act upon this sense of justice, we do not act upon one of our primary beliefs, and our freedom is restricted accordingly. To be truly free, in other words, we must be prepared to contemplate revolution. Another reason why we do not act is that, from the days of our birth, we are immersed in the political situation into which we are born, and as a result we cannot imagine our way through it; we cannot envisage that it will ever come to an end. This is why imagination is the first qualification of the revolutionary. A revolutionary is someone who recognizes the contingency of power. What sustains coercive power is not force of arms, or even capital, but belief. When people cease to believe -to believe in it as they would believe in a god, in its omnipotence, its unassailability and its validity -and when they act upon that belief, an empire can collapse, almost overnight. Those who possess power will surrender it only when they see that the costs -physical or psychological –of retaining it are higher than the costs of losing it. There have been many occasions on which rulers possessed the means of suppressing revolt -the necessary tanks and planes or cannons and cavalry divisions -but chose not to deploy them, because they perceived that the personal effort of retaining power outweighed the effort of relinquishing it. One of the surprises of history is the tendency of some of the most inflexible rulers suddenly to give up, for no evident material reason. They give up because they are tired, so tired that they can no longer sustain the burning purpose required to retain power. They are tired because they have had to struggle against the unbelief of their people, to reassert, through a supreme psychological effort, the validity of their power.

#### Personal rejection is critical to moving away from capitalism—the system is only inevitable if we treat it as such. Holloway 05,

Holloway, 05 (John, Ph.D in Political Science from the University of Edinburgh, “Can we change the World without taking power”, A debate between Holloway and Alex Callinicos, August 16th, <http://www.zmag.org/znet/viewArticle/5616>)

I don't know the answer. Perhaps we can change the world without taking power. Perhaps we cannot. The starting point: for all of us, I think: is uncertainty, not knowing, a common search for a way forward. Because it becomes more and more clear that capitalism is a catastrophe for humanity. A radical change in the organisation of society, that is, revolution, is more urgent than ever. And this revolution can only be world revolution if it is to be effective. But it is unlikely that world revolution can be achieved in one single blow. This means that the only way in which we can conceive of revolution is as interstitial revolution, as a revolution that takes place in the interstices of capitalism, a revolution that occupies spaces in the world while capitalism still exists. The question is how we conceive of these interstices, whether we think of them as states or in other ways. In thinking about this, we have to start from where we are, from the many rebellions and insubordinations that have brought us to Porto Alegre. The world is full of such rebellions, of people saying NO to capitalism: NO, we shall not live our lives according to the dictates of capitalism, we shall do what we consider necessary or desirable and not what capital tells us to do. Sometimes we just see capitalism as an all-encompassing system of domination and forget that such rebellions exist everywhere. At times they are so small that even those involved do not perceive them as refusals, but often they are collective projects searching for an alternative way forward and sometimes they are as big as the Lacandon Jungle or the Argentinazo of three years ago or the revolt in Bolivia just over a year ago. All of these insubordinations are characterised by a drive towards self-determination, an impulse that says, 'No, you will not tell us what to do, we shall decide for ourselves what we must do.' These refusals can be seen as fissures, as cracks in the system of capitalist domination. Capitalism is not (in the first place) an economic system, but a system of command. Capitalists, through money, command us, telling us what to do. To refuse to obey is to break the command of capital.

### They Say: Pragmatism (Small Steps)

#### Rejecting capitalism is key to opening up new alternatives. Only complete refusal, not piecemeal reform, can prevent otherwise inevitable slavery and extinction. Herod 04,

Herod, 04 (James, <http://site.www.umb.edu/faculty/salzman_g/Strate/GetFre/4thEd/4-index.htm>, Getting Free, 4th EditionA sketch of an association of democratic, autonomous neighborhoods and how to create it, Fourth Edition, January 2004

It is time to try to describe, at first abstractly and later concretely, a strategy for destroying capitalism. This strategy, at its most basic, calls for pulling time, energy, and resources out of capitalist civilization and putting them into building a new civilization. The image then is one of emptying out capitalist structures, hollowing them out, by draining wealth, power, and meaning out of them until there is nothing left but shells. This is definitely an aggressive strategy. It requires great militancy, and constitutes an attack on the existing order. The strategy clearly recognizes that capitalism is the enemy and must be destroyed, but it is not a frontal attack aimed at overthrowing the system, but an inside attack aimed at gutting it, while simultaneously replacing it with something better, something we want. Thus capitalist structures(corporations, governments, banks, schools, etc.) are not ***seized*** so much as simply ***abandoned.*** Capitalist relations are not ***fought*** so much as they are simply ***rejected***. We stop participating in activities that support (finance, condone) the capitalist world and start participating in activities that build a new world while simultaneously undermining the old. We create a new pattern of social relations alongside capitalist relations and then we continually build and strengthen our new pattern while doing every thing we can to weaken capitalist relations. In this way our new democratic, non-hierarchical, non-commodified relations can eventually overwhelm the capitalist relations and force them out of existence. This is how it has to be done. This is a plausible, realistic strategy. To think that we could create a whole new world of decent social arrangements overnight, in the midst of a crisis, during a so-called revolution, or during the collapse of capitalism, is foolhardy. Our new social world must grow within the old, and in opposition to it, until it is strong enough to dismantle and abolish capitalist relations. Such a revolution will never happen automatically, blindly, determinably, because of the inexorable, materialist laws of history. It will happen, and only happen, because we want it to, and because we know what we’re doing and know how we want to live, and know what obstacles have to be overcome before we can live that way, and know how to distinguish between our social patterns and theirs. But we must not think that the capitalist world can simply be ignored, in a live and let live attitude, while we try to build new lives elsewhere. (There *is* no elsewhere.) There is at least one thing, wage-slavery, that we can’t simply stop participating in (but even here there are ways we can chip away at it). Capitalism must be ***explicitly refused*** and replaced by something else. This constitutes War, but it is not a war in the traditional sense of armies and tanks, but a war fought on a daily basis, on the level of everyday life, by millions of people. It is a war nevertheless because the accumulators of capital will use coercion, brutality, and murder, as they have always done in the past, to try to block any rejection of the system. They have always had to force compliance; they will not hesitate to continue doing so. Nevertheless, there are many concrete ways that individuals, groups, and neighborhoods can gut capitalism, which I will enumerate shortly. We must always keep in mind how we became slaves; then we can see more clearly how we can cease being slaves. We were forced into wage-slavery because the ruling class slowly, systematically, and brutally destroyed our ability to live autonomously. By driving us off the land, changing the property laws, destroying community rights, destroying our tools, imposing taxes, destroying our local markets, and so forth, we were forced onto the labor market in order to survive, our only remaining option being to sell, for a wage, our ability to work. It’s quite clear then how we can overthrow slavery. We must reverse this process. We must begin to reacquire the ability to live without working for a wage or buying the products made by wage-slaves (that is, we must get free from the labor market and the way of living based on it), and embed ourselves instead in cooperative labor and cooperatively produced goods. Another clarification is needed. This strategy does not call for ***reforming*** capitalism, for changing capitalism into something else. It calls for ***replacing*** capitalism, totally, with a new civilization. This is an important distinction, because capitalism has proved impervious to reforms, as a system. We can sometimes in some places win certain concessions from it (usually only temporary ones) and win some (usually short-lived) improvements in our lives as its victims, but we cannot reform it piecemeal, as a system. Thus our strategy of gutting and eventually destroying capitalism requires at a minimum a totalizing image, an awareness that we are attacking an entire way of life and replacing it with another, and not merely reforming one way of life into something else. Many people may not be accustomed to thinking about entire systems and social orders, but everyone knows what a lifestyle is, or a way of life, and that is the way we should approach it. The thing is this: in order for capitalism to be destroyed millions and millions of people must be dissatisfied with their way of life. They must *want something else* and see certain existing things as obstacles to getting what they want. It is not useful to think of this as a new ideology. It is not merely a belief-system that is needed, like a religion, or like Marxism, or Anarchism. Rather it is a new prevailing vision, a dominant desire, an overriding need. What must exist is a pressing desire to live a certain way, and not to live another way. If this pressing desire were a desire to live free, to be autonomous, to live in democratically controlled communities, to participate in the self-regulating activities of a mature people, then capitalism could be destroyed. Otherwise we are doomed to perpetual slavery and possibly even to extinction.

#### Single issue-reforms are destined to fail—environmental problems are too global and inter-related—only addressing capitalism can save us. Foster 08,

Foster, Clark, and York, 08 (John Bellamy Foster, editor of Monthly Review and professor of sociology at the University of Oregon. Brett Clark, assistant professor of sociology at North Carolina State University. Richard York, coeditor of Organization & Environment and associate professor of sociology at the University of Oregon. “Ecology: The Moment of Truth - An Introduction.” July 2008. http://www.monthlyreview.org/080701foster-clark-york.php)

The principal environmental problem for Speth then is capitalism as the “operating system” of the modern economy. “Today’s corporations have been called ‘externalizing machines.’” Indeed, “there are fundamental biases in capitalism that favor the present over the future and the private over the public.” Quoting the system’s own defenders, Robert Samuleson and William Nordhaus, in the seventeenth (2001) edition of their textbook on Macroeconomics, Speth points out that capitalismis the quintessential “Ruthless Economy,” engaged “in the relentless pursuit of profits.” Building on this critique, Speth goes on to conclude in his book that: (1) “today’s system of political economy, referred to here as modern capitalism, is destructive of the environment, and not in a minor way but in a way that profoundly threatens the planet”; (2) “the affluent societies have reached or soon will reach the point where, as Keynes put it, the economic problem has been solved...there is enough to go around”; (3) “in the more affluent societies, modern capitalism is no longer enhancing human well-being”; (4) “the international social movement for change—which refers to itself as ‘the irresistible rise of global anti-capitalism’—is stronger than many imagine and will grow stronger; there is a coalescing of forces: peace, social justice, community, ecology, feminism—a movement of movements”; (5) “people and groups are busily planting the seeds of change through a host of alternative arrangements, and still other attractive directions for upgrading to a new operating system have been identified”; (6) “the end of the Cold War...opens the door...for the questioning of today’s capitalism.” Speth does not actually embrace socialism, which he associates, in the Cold War manner, with Soviet-type societies in their most regressive form. Thus he argues explicitly for a “nonsocialist” alternative to capitalism. Such a system would make use of markets (but not the self-regulating market society of traditional capitalism) and would promote a “New Sustainability World” or a “Social Greens World” (also called “Eco-Communalism”) as depicted by the Global Scenario Group. The latter scenario has been identified with radical thinkers like William Morris (who was inspired by both Marx and Ruskin). In this sense, Speth’s arguments are not far from that of the socialist movement of the twenty-first century, which is aimed at the core values of social justice and ecological sustainability. The object is to create a future in which generations still to come will be able to utilize their creative abilities to the fullest, while having their basic needs met: a result made possible only through the rational reorganization by the associated producers of the human metabolism with nature.13 Such rational reorganization of the metabolism between nature and society needs to be directed not simply at climate change but also at a whole host of other environmental problems. Some of these are addressed in the present issue: the geopolitics of peak oil (John Bellamy Foster), the production of biofuels as a liquid fuel alternative and its consequences (Fred Magdoff), the economics of climate change (Minqi Li), the science of climate change (John W. Farley), the ocean crisis (Brett Clark and Rebecca Clausen), the problem of large dams (Rohan D’Souza), and the world water crisis (Maude Barlow). Other ecological crises of great importance are not, however, dealt with here: species extinction (and loss of biological diversity in general), deforestation, desertification, soil degradation, acid rain, the proliferation of toxic wastes (including in living tissues), market-regulated biotechnology, urban congestion, population growth, and animal rights. No single issue captures the depth and breadth of what we call “the environmental problem,” which encompasses all of these ecological contradictions of our society and more. If we are facing a “moment of truth” with respect to ecology today, it has to do with the entire gamut of capitalism’s effects on natural (and human) reproduction. Any attempt to solve one of these problems (such as climate change) without addressing the others is likely to fail, since these ecological crises, although distinct in various ways, typically share common causes. In our view, only a unified vision that sees human production as not only social, but also rooted in a metabolic relation to nature, will provide the necessary basis to confront an ecological rift that is now as wide as the planet.

#### Reform within neo-liberalism makes radical politics impossible—the system itself is the problem, not specific technologies. Swyngedouw 06,

Swyngedouw, 06 (Erik, Dept of Geography, School of Environment and Development, Manchester University, “Impossible “Sustainability” and the Post-Political Condition”, Forthcoming in: David Gibbs and Rob Krueger (eds.) Sustainable Development, [www.liv.ac.uk/geography/seminars/Sustainabilitypaper.doc](http://www.liv.ac.uk/geography/seminars/Sustainabilitypaper.doc))

The environment and debates over the environment and nature are not only perfect expressions of such a post-political order, but in fact, the mobilisation of environmental issues is one of the key arenas through which this post-political consensus becomes constructed, when “politics proper is progressively replaced by expert social administration” (Žižek, 2005: 117). The fact that Bush does not want to play ball on the climate change theme is indeed seen by both the political elites in Europe and by the environmentalists as a serious threat to the post-political consensus. That is why both political elites and opposition groups label him as a radical conservative. Bill Clinton, of course, embodied the post-political consensus in a much more sophisticated and articulated manner, not to speak of his unfortunate successor, Al Gore, who recently resurfaced as a newborn climate change warrior (The Independent, 22 May 2006). The post-political environmental consensus, therefore, is one that is radically reactionary, one that forestalls the articulation of divergent, conflicting, and alternative trajectories of future socio-environmental possibilities and of human-human and human-nature articulations and assemblages. It holds on to a harmonious view of nature that can be recaptured while re-producing if not solidifying a liberal-capitalist order for which there seems to be no alternative. Much of the sustainability argument has evacuated the politics of the possible, the radical contestation of alternative future socio-environmental possibilities and socio-natural arrangements, and silences the radical antagonisms and conflicts that are constitutive of our socio-natural orders by externalising conflict. In climate change, for example, the conflict is posed as one of society versus CO2. In fact, the sustainable future desired by ‘sustainablity’ pundits has no name. While alternative futures in the past were named and counted (for example, communism, socialism, anarchism, libertarianism, liberalism), the desired sustainable environmental future has no name and no process, only a state or condition. This is as exemplified by the following apocalyptic warning in which the celebrated quote from Marx’s Communist Manifesto and its invocation of the ‘the spectre of communism that is haunting the world’ (once the celebrated name of hope for liberation) is replaced by the spectre of Armageddon: “A specter is haunting the entire world: but it is not that of communism. ….. Climate change - no more, no less than nature’s payback for what we are doing to our precious planet - is day by day now revealing itself. Not only in a welter of devastating scientific data and analysis but in the repeated extreme weather conditions to which we are all, directly or indirectly, regular observers, and, increasingly, victims” (Levene, 2005).Climate Change is of course not a politics, let only a political programme or socio-environmental project; it is pure negation, the negativity of the political; one we can all concur with, around which a consensus can be built, but which eludes conflict, evacuates the very political moment. By doing so, it does not translate Marx’s dictum for the contemporary period, but turns it into its radical travesty.

#### Single-issue movements will be co-opted by capitalism—only complete structural challenges have any hope. Meszaros 95,

Meszaros, 95 (Istivan, professor emeritus at the University of Sussex, Beyond Capital, pg. 39-40)

To aggravate the situation, everything is further complicated by the fact that it is not feasible to find partial solutions to the problems that must be faced. Thus, no ‘single issue’ can be realistically considered a ‘single issue.’ If nothing else, this circumstance has been forcefully highlighted by the disconcerting marginalization of the Green movement on the success of which so much hope has been placed in recent times, even among former socialists. In the past up to a few decades ago it was possible to squeeze out of capital what appeared to be significant concessions—such as relative gains for the socialist movement (which later turned out to be reversible both as legislative measures for working class action and as gradually improving standard of living), obtained through the defensive organizations of labour: its trades unions and parliamentary parties. These gains could be conceded by capital so long as they could be assimilated and integrated by the system as a whole and turned to its productive advantage in the course of its self-expansion. Today, by contrast, confronting even partial issues with any hope of success implies the necessity of challenging the capital system as such. For in our own historical epoch, when productive self-expansion is no longer a readily available way out of the accumulating difficulties and contradictions (hence the purely wishful thinking of getting rid of the black hope of indebtedness by ‘growing out of it’), the global capital system of necessity frustrates all attempts at interfering even to a minimal extent with its structural parameters. In this respect the obstacles to be overcome are actually shared by labour—that is, labour as the radical alternative to capital’s social metabolic order—and the ‘single issue’ movements. For the historic failure of social democracy clearly underlined that only integrable demands can gain legitimacy under the rule of capital. Environmentalism by its very nature—just like the great historic cause of women’s liberation—is non-integrable. Consequently no such cause will for the capital system conveniently fade way, irrespective of how many setbacks and defeats the politically organized forms of ‘single issue’ movements might have to suffer in the foreseeable future. However, historically/epochally defined non-integrability, no matter how important for the future, cannot guarantee success on its own. Switching the allegiance of disappointed socialists from the working class to so-called ‘new social movements’ (praised now in opposition to, and by discarding altogether the emancipatory potential of, labour) must be considered, therefore, far too premature and naïve. Single issue movements, even if they fight for non-integrable issue, can be picked off and marginalized one by one, because they cannot lay claim to representing a coherent and comprehensive alternative to the given order as a mode of social metabolic control and system of societal reproduction. This is what makes focusing on the socialist emancipatory potential of labour more important today than ever before. For labour is not only non-integrable (in contrast to some historically specific political manifestations of labour, like reformist social democracy, which may be rightly characterized as integrable and indeed in the last few decades also completely integrated), but—precisely as the only feasible structural alternative to capital—can provide the comprehensive strategic framework within which all ‘single issue’ emancipatory movements can successfully make their common cause for the survival of humanity.

#### Mainstream environmentalism has no hope of fundamentally challenging the system. Trainer 07,

Trainer, 07 (Ted Trainer, Senior Lecturer in the School of Social Work at the University of New South Wales. “Renewable Energy Cannot Sustain a Consumer Society” p. 7-8)

As Chapter 10 will make clear, the Green Movement in general is deeply flawed. It is for the most part, only light green. Most environmental gurus and agencies never go beyond seeking reforms within consumer-capitalist society. They do not consider the possibility that environmental and other major global problems cannot be solved without radical change to a very different kind of society. Chapter 10 explains why a sustainable and just society cannot be a consumer society, it cannot be driven by market forces, it must have relatively little international trade and no economic growth at all, it must be made up mostly of small local economies, and its driving values cannot be competition and acquisitiveness. Whether or not we are likely to achieve such a transition is not crucial here (... and I am quite pessimistic about achieving it). The point is that when our “limits to growth” situation is understood, a sustainable and just society cannot be conceived in any other terms. Discussion of these themes is of the utmost importance, but few if any green agencies ever even mention them. 8 *Chapter 1* The “tech-fix optimists”, who are to be found in plague proportions in the renewable energy field, are open to the same criticism. If the position underlying this book is valid, then despite the indisputably desirable technologies all these people are developing, they are working for the devil. If it is the case that a sustainable and just world cannot be achieved without transition from consumer society to a Simpler Way of some kind, then this transition is being thwarted by those who reinforce the faith that technical advances will eliminate any need to even think about such a transition.

#### Activists must concern themselves with theory and discourse before action. Philip 01,

Kavita Philip (2001) Seeds of Neo-Colonialism? Reflections on Ecological Politics in the New World Order, Capitalism Nature Socialism, 12:2, 3-47,

One of the most prolific and widely known South Asian environmentalist is Vandana Shiva, director of the Research Foundation for Science, Technology and Natural Resource Policy. Shiva has forged a mix of activism, research, and policy-making, successfully using the tools of academia, media, and direct action to effect social change. Her work has facilitated genuine gains for Indian farmers, such as the setting up of community seed banks and the contestation of corporate intellectual property rights to neem compounds. While her activist agenda continues to grow in scope and power, her theoretical paradigms have aged poorly. Shiva’s critique of the “patriarchal domination” of a metaphysically valued earth was a logical outgrowth of a 1970s style eco-feminism, but its essentialist over-generalizations and historical inaccuracies have been critiqued by succeeding generations of ever more theoretically savvy eco-critics. The critiques have been largely accurate in terms of identifying Shiva’s tendency to assume a natural, or inherent, link between women and an anti-exploitative, “nurturing” relationship with the earth; but their effect has been blunted by the suspicion that marks the relationship of green activists to green theorists. Those who favor “action” over “analysis” tend to dismiss the theorists’ critique because the language of theory appears inaccessible, specialized, and pretentious.40 Specifically, critiques of Shiva’s “essentializing” rhetoric are countered with questions such as: Why should activists bother to take account of mere rhetorical critiques of their arguments? Aren’t activists more concerned with the practical results of their work, rather than with linguistic accuracy or rhetorical elegance? Theorists, for their part, have often failed to demonstrate (or seemed unconcerned with) the practical consequences, or ideological politics, following from particular kinds of theoretical sloppiness. In Shiva’s case, two so-called theoretical issues seem worrying in practical ways; they are evidence of a theory-praxis nexus that needs to be addressed dialectically rather than dichotomously. First, it is not just Shiva’s model of womanhood that is static and essentialist; science and technology suffer the same fate, and nature itself is rendered sacred (and thus also static; not to be sullied by profane technology). Second, this “rediscovery” of the authentically indigenous “sanctity” of nature brings Shiva uncomfortably close to a traditionalist religious nationalism, with disturbing implications for the kind of communitarianism she envisions. Let us look more closely at these two issues. Shiva’s simple (often simplistic) subsistence model, undergirded by a nature-ethic that seems transcendentalist and romanticist, leaves little room for a detailed critique of capitalism and the relationship of human production to nature. While Shiva certainly opposes corporate ownership of nature, the main villain is “science” per se (rather than a specifically capitalist, or bourgeois science). Shiva sees science and technology as inherently evil, and advocates a return to a pre-techno logical existence and a subsistence model of production, implying that self-sufficient peasant societies insulated from global trade will automatically be egalitarian and respectful of nature. Such a position is reminiscent of nineteenth-century British romanticists and American transcendentalists, who could afford to worship a mystical nature only because they could access it via the privilege of their elite social positions. Left Business Observer editor Doug Henwood identifies this ideology accurately when he rejects the “elitist asceticism” of anti globalizing romantics (among whom he includes David Korten, Doug Tompkins, Jerry Mander, and Vandana Shiva). Henwood, noting that “[t]he ecofeminist Vandana Shiva views technology as a male disruption of the sacred woman-nature dyad, and advocates a ‘subsist ence’ economic model,” says, bluntly, of the anti-technological anti globalizers: “[Their] dream of local self-sufficiency is suffocating and reactionary.”41

#### Pragmatic environmental protection fails—capitalism skews their methodology. Philip 01,

Kavita Philip (2001) Seeds of Neo-Colonialism? Reflections on Ecological Politics in the New World Order, Capitalism Nature Socialism, 12:2, 3-47,

I turn next to the rejection of romanticist ecopolitical theories from an activist perspective. Putting the debate over “nature” into a historical context certainly lends credence to the claim that multinational agents of globalization are today rehearsing many of the strategies of British colonial control of ecological and intellectual power in its colonies. In recent years a debate has emerged, over the South’s ability to appro priate the North’s tools. Some grass-roots groups have taken the possibility of ownership to be a potentially empowering one, and are beginning to articulate a narrative in which modernity is co-opted rather than resisted head-on. I term this the “pragmatist” environmentalist position, in the sense that the actors adopt a pragmatic rather than a critical/ideological position with respect to western capitalism, modernity, and Reason. In particular, one growing activist-academic coalition, the SRISTIHoney Bee network,48 takes the view that legal means of privatization can be used to challenge the authority of multinationals to operate within the spaces of traditionally-defined use of medicinal plants. Anil Gupta, SRISTI co-ordinator, argues that environmentalists who assert the incompatibility of indigenous practices with private property are deepening the exploitation of grass-roots innovators, rather than protecting their “freedom” from modernity. This inversion of the narrative of indigenous economies as inherently “free” complicates the altruism versus private property story that has more often been set out for western academic audiences. Although the “new traditionalists” and the “pragmatists” rarely address each other in print, it is instructive to contrast their diametrically opposed positions on preservation of the environment and local knowledge of it. Gadgil and Guha’s argument grows out of their reading of the environmental history of the South Asian sub-continent; Gupta’s grows out of his experience with two grassroots organizations, the Honey Bee network and SRISTI. “Traditionalist” communitarians Gadgil and Guha read the practice of modernity as the thinly-veiled text of neo-colonialism, and argue that we must refuse this new subjugation by rediscovering our egalitarian, eco-friendly roots in ancient models of the village community. Gupta, a “pragmatist” environmentalist, agrees that indigenous knowledge is under threat, but argues that, precisely because of the historical fact of colonial and post-colonial globalization, we cannot afford to contemplate the fantasy of reconstructing isolated, self-sufficient local communities. What Gadgil and Guha do seem to leave unarticulated is the material basis of the alternate ethics to which they call for a return. Dividing Indian society into the environmentally friendly “ecosystem people” and rapacious, modernizing “omnivores,” they advocate a Gandhian conservation ethic: In so far as Gandhism seeks to conserve all that is best in our traditions, it might be called the Indian variant of conservatism, with this significant caveat: that it seeks to conserve not the hierarchy of aristocratic privilege, but the repository of wisdom and meaning vested in ecosystem people.49 Gadgil and Guha argue, further, that: [P]ower to use natural resources [should] lie not with insensitive and corrupt bureaucracies but with the people who most deeply depend on these resources. Today those in power, the omnivores of India, can successfully pass on the costs of resource abuse and environmental degradation to the masses of ecosystem people, and to ecological refugees....But the self interest of India’s ecosystem people is congruent for the most part with the good husbanding of natural resources, at least in their own localities. The real solution for the long-term health of the environment thus lies in passing effective political power to the people.50 The questions of which “people” are to have what sort of political power, how we might identify the “most deep” dependence on natural resources, or of how vested repositories of wisdom are to be preserved and evaluated, are not addressed anywhere in Gadgil and/or Guha’s prolific output. While Guha and Gadgil make impressive efforts to offer theoretical solutions to the problem of environmental colonialism, they do not offer a grounded explanation of how and why these solutions will improve the situation, nor do they offer evidence that they will address existing local inequalities. Guha and Gadgil undermine their own argument — which has many attractive, progressive elements — by articulating it in idealist (i.e., anti-materialist, non-grounded) terms. Anil Gupta does not have the theoretical, paradigm-defining reputation of Guha and Gadgil; his publications are mostly reports of the activity of the grass-roots networks he works with, and policy recommendations that follow from these experiences. His model is both aggressively local, in that his examples are drawn from the networks of Gujarati agriculturalists who contribute to the Honey Bee archive of local practice, and unapologetically global, in that he argues for a global market-based engagement with globalization. On the biodi versity-rich, economically poor communities who are viewed, in the alternative discourses (such as in Shiva, Gadgil, Guha), as local ecologists whose anti-market model must be emulated for national survival, Gupta argues that, while these intentions are “noble,” this model “seeks to tap knowledge without sufficient reciprocity.” Gupta describes the important political/institutional tasks in terms of reorienting educational and research priorities towards more equitable development, modifying the nature of contracts among multinational and local actors so that they ensure participation from the latter, and ensuring fair and just remuneration (through the market system) for commercialization of herbal drugs, pesticides, dyes, and so on. Granting that local values often favor free and open knowledge-sharing, he argues, nevertheless, that it is the activist’s task to work at somewhat of a tangent to this tendency: Clearly, we cannot conserve diversity by keeping people poor. Studies have shown that many indigenous innovators, whether individuals or communities, do not consider their diversity or knowledge a tradable commodity. Their ethical values motivate them to share their knowledge without expectation of material reward. Consequently, while they remain poor the extractors of their knowledge accumulate wealth. We cannot therefore imply that their superior ethics should legitimize a morality in the market place which justifies the extraction.51 The way out of this situation, Gupta argues, is not through a refusal to engage with the global market, but through an assertion of the right to value-addition. Colonial systems of extraction depended for their profits on extracting raw materials cheap from colonies, so that the processes of manufacture, production, and marketing could occur in the metropole, thus keeping the value-additive (and profit-making) elements under metropolitan control. Gupta’s brainchild SRISTI aims to link “green” consumers of the North with “green” producers of the South. He reasons that most production in high risk environments — for example, drought and flood prone regions, hill and forest-fringe regions — is already organic. These are often also regions of high male out-migration, so that there are more women-headed households; there is low literacy, and high poverty, but a richness in local knowledge about uses of biodiversity. But in the absence of international “organic” certification facilities for production and export, and product development and marketing infrastructures, no value is added to production in these contexts. Gupta argues: This is one area in which market-based approach to development will work even in the post-GATT world because even under GATT, the policy on no actionable subsidies provides that in contiguous income, developmental subsidies will not be actionable under WTO.52 Gupta believes that access to western consumer markets for these local populations will provide them with incentives to continue to maintain or foster biodiversity. His assumption here is that local communities are not necessarily or inherently conservationist, but that they have the potential to be so. None of his models will be possible, Gupta concedes, without investment in “capacity building.” Education, in his model, must include global networks of institutions, individuals, and social movements; access for grass-roots activists to scientific laboratories; a fund for rewarding creativity and innovation at the grassroots; and institutionalized commitments to sustainability, human rights, gender equality and ethical business practices. This model is very different from the traditionalist vision of dispersed, self-sufficient communities who preserve their own knowledge by striving to protect it from global circuits of knowledge and commerce. These differences between the traditionalist and pragmatist visions are instructive, and seem to stem from each group’s understanding of the power relations, injustices, and productive possibilities that make up the present status quo. Both, it seems, accurately identify constitutive injustices that led to the present predicament of indigenous communities. Colonialism and the capitalist global market did wreak havoc on resource use, as the traditionalists argue; the existence of local hierarchies and unethical business practices today does in fact deny the indigenous innovator entry into a market which is growing rich on his knowledge, as the pragmatists argue. However, if the traditionalists allow the nostalgia for a rosy imaginary past, free of ecological, patriarchal and brahminical violence, to substitute for the more painstaking task of writing detailed materialist histories that acknowledge the contradictions in “indigenous” societies, the pragmatists, by contrast, appear to have a rather benign vision of contemporary global markets. Although impressive in its elaborate infrastructure, its combination of field study and economic practice, and its unwavering concern to give local interests the highest priority, the pragmatist environmentalist model seems to assume that free markets are really “free,” and that small entrepreneurs can alter the functioning of international financial institutions and Northern governments. In the pragmatist’s world there would be no forced structural adjustment policies, no manipulation of national policies by multinationals, no corporate subsidies and big business lobbies, no payoffs of indigenous groups in exchange for pharmaceutical corporate rights to their resources, and no hostile takeovers of upstart competitors by global oligopolists. The traditionalist and the pragmatist model are both important components of oppressed peoples’ dreams of liberation. Both have played important, though separate, roles in mobilizing public awareness of the abuses of colonial power, the dangers of commodified knowledge, and the potential strengths of grassroots organizing. Yet, their (mis)readings of global and/or local power skew their predictive efficacy. Further, both these schools of environmentalism are largely silent on the issue of nationalism.

### They Say: Cede the Political

#### Their “cede the political” argument would only make sense if it were possible to survive in a capitalist world. Reform contributes to the illusion that only quick fixes are needed. We need to admit that rejecting capitalism is our only hope. Duchrow 95,

Duchrow, 95 (Ulrich Duchrow, professor of systematic theology at the University of Heidelberg specialising in ecumenical theology and theology-economy issues. “Alternatives to Global Capitalism,” p. 230-234)

If one affirms life and life-bringing economic systems, then one must reject economic systems and structures which bring about death. One objection often raised in this respect says that total dissent would mean losing all political credibility, and that the political possibilities of relative improvement can no longer be seized when tone rejects certain basic elements of the capitalist economy. This argument presupposes that the changes in the world economic system that are necessary for survival can be achieved with the existing political institutions. Only when the fundamental, death-inducing mechanisms have been recognised and eliminated can a political strategy be formulated which may be able to help avoid the predictable catastrophes. It is not the desire to constantly criticise bur the necessity avoid illusion when dealing with life-sustaining alternatives for life which compels us to specify what must be rejected, so that the best can be achieved from this basis. Exactly what is it that has to be rejected on principle in the present global system, and to which we have to find alternatives for life's sake? It is the mechanisms which, uncontrolled and unimpeded, gear economic activity to the accumulation of money by those who already have it, with the aid of the absolute principle of competition in the global market. Nature and people are, accordingly, subordinated to this end, as far as possible. In concrete terms, the mechanisms referred to are: the transnational money matkets, in so far as they can and do escape national and international institutions, provided they tolerate or favor the pure capitalist market; and also the ideological instruments connected with science, the media, schools, universities and churches, which orient people towards achieving this goal or whose potential for resistance to the deadly wealth accumulation market is not used. But because the money mechanism only functions with the inclusion of the commodity-money relationship, all people, provided they have the money and are consumers with purchasing power, are actively caught up in the machinery of wealth accumulation (incidentally, so are those without much purchasing power, in so far as they – understandably – strive for a share in consumption rather than seeking alternatives to the commodity-money system). That means, however, that although the totalitarian character of the money-oriented system originates from the power of the world market, the market can only exercise this power because so many players, right down to individual human beings, facilitate its operation. Rejection in this case is, therefore, not an attitude adopted with external reference only to identifiable players in the world market. It involves a fundamental change at all levels, including that of the individual. Before we examine this dimension of rejection more closely, we should consider once more the need for it. From a social point of view, the totalitarian character of the deregulated and competitive world market, centred around wealth accumulation, is leading to dramatic levels of pauperisation and exclusion of more and more people, not only in the South but increasingly in the East and also in the West. Today we have reached a point where at least two thirds of the world's population are either dying of hunger or living on or below the poverty line. These people are subsequently excluded from the formal economy. From an environmental point of view, our planet and the basic conditions for life will be destroyed if the transformation of nature into commodities-money for the purpose of wealth accumulation continues to accelerate. It is, therefore, imperative that the focus of the economy be shifted from money accumulation to the people's needs. A mere 'taming' of the system is not sufficient, although this must be considered when reflecting upon the question of relative political opinions. The only satisfactory solution can be one that takes into account the lives of' not just a few privileged Northerners or even of all people alive today but also of future generations, and ensures that they have the renewable natural resources necessary for survival and procreation. Such a solution would result in the elimination of the money-accumulation economy and its associated structures. This must be recognised before embarking upon any attempt to find concrete alternatives and new regulatory instruments. Any other starting point would be potentially dangerous because it would only create illusions. E. Altvatet was right when he said that anybody who maintains that within the framework of a capitalist economy, the environmental catastrophe can be held at bay in the long run is either opportunistic or naive. The same conclusion was also reached by R. Kurz and L. Mayer, who have been quoted already, and, indirectly – As a result of what started with the "cut-throat competition" between the northern Italian city-states, the whole of humanity is degenerating into a mass of competing individuals, who no longer accept their mutual limitations and dependence, instead striving endlessly for profit and success without considering the rising tide of violence and the effects on the weak. Competitiveness for unlimited money accumulation is the objective and subjective basic structure, the "god" of our market society, which determines the whole. Accordingly, the core of what we must reject is the absolute value attributed to competition and the total absence of limits set on the cancerous growth of capital. The liberation must, therefore, be comprehensive, just as the 'spirit' of capitalism is comprehensive. In other words, the spiritual side is not one of many dimensions but decisive for the whole.

#### Their cede the political argument is empirically denied—moderate left environmental movements have failed—capitalism itself must be confronted. Meszaros 95,

Meszaros, 95 (Istivan, professor emeritus at the University of Sussex, Beyond Capital, pg. 39-40)

In the last few decades, by contrast, protest movements—notably the various shades of environmentalism—emerged from a very different social setting, even with far from socialist value orientation. These movements attempted to gain a foothold in the field of politics in several capitalist countries through the agency of reform-oriented Green parties. They appealed to individuals concerned about the ongoing environmental destruction, leaving undefined the underlying socioeconomic causes, as well as their class connotations. This they did precisely in order to broaden their own electoral appeal, in the hope of successfully intervening in the reform process for the purpose of reversing the identified dangerous trends. The fact that within a relatively short space of time all such parties became marginalized, despite their spectacular initial successes almost everywhere, underlines that the causes manifesting in environmental destruction are much more deep-seated than it was assumed by the leaders of these programmatically non-class oriented reform movements, including the people who imagined that they could institute a viable alternative to the socialist project by inviting its adherents to move ‘From Red to Green.’ No matter how important—indeed literally vital—as a ‘single issue’ around which varieties of the Green movement tried to articulate their reform programmes, so as to make an inroad into the power structure and decision making processes of the established order, the incontestable imperative of environmental protection turned out to be quite intractable on account of the corresponding prevailing production processes. The capital system proved to be unreformable even under its most obviously destructive aspect. Today the difficulty is not only that the dangers inseparable from the ongoing development are much greater than ever before, inasmuch as the global capital system had reached its contradictory zenith of maturation and saturation. The dangers now extend over the whole planet, and consequently the urgency of doing something about them before it is too late happens to be particularly acute.

### They Say: Permutation

The only successful permutation would require severance; a normal permutation is impossible assuming you win a link because they reproduce capitalism and you probably cannot both reject and support capitalism at the same time. The only other type of permutation would have to be something along the lines of do the aff and the alt because the aff is a small step to protect the environment in which case you read the answers to pragmatism as a reason why the alt alone has a net-benefit.